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A STUDY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN A PRAIRIE PROVINCE

by



Wayne Andrew Antony

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and
recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research,
for acceptance, a thesis entitled " A Study of Public
Participation in a Prairie Province " submitted by
Wayne Andrew Antony in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

For Mom and Dad

Who inspired in me the desire to know.

ABSTRACT

The problem addressed in this thesis was a concern over the apparent failure of attempts at public participation in Canada generally and in Alberta specifically. In order to deal with this problem, and with the lack of systematic theorizing in the subject area, two competing, analytical models of public participation - the elitist model and the conflict model - were constructed by relating literature in the area to two broader social and political theoretical frameworks.

Once developed, these two paradigms were applied to a specific case of public participation: a government of Alberta decision to build a dam on the Red Deer River. This application of theory to practise drew primarily upon two methodological devices: content analysis and case/historical methods.

The major findings of this thesis revolved around the failure of the attitudinal variables of the elitist model to provide adequate explanation of the events that took place at Red Deer. Concomitantly, the structural concerns isolated by the conflict model found much more empirical validity and therefore provided a more plausible explanation. That is, the failure of public participation is more probably due to structural, rather than attitudinal, inadequacies.

The results of the study suggested that future practise of and research into public participation revolve around structural concerns. Practically speaking, public participation must take place in all stages of planning in a "multi-juncture" process. Equally as

important is a free-flowing and 'dialectical' information system. The most important factor identified was that the public must be guaranteed impact upon the final decision when public participation is used as part of the process. In addition, the public apathy variable isolated and verified by the elitist model suggests that public organization is also important.

Future research is required to further clarify and operationalize structural concepts. It was also suggested that a cross-sectional study is needed to transcend the space-generalization limitations of a single case study.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze public participation in the Canadian experience. Although the study attempts to refer to the Canadian experience as a whole, special treatment will be given to the province of Alberta. The analysis will be carried out within frameworks derived from social and political theory.

This analysis of public participation will take place primarily within the confines of a case study. A recent government of Alberta decision regarding the location of a dam on the Red Deer River will form the specific substance of that case study. Hopefully, this analysis will provide insights and possible contributions in three distinct categories: practical, theoretical, and methodological.

The Problem

Generally speaking, the impetus for this study derives from two main sources: 1) the general rise in demands for and interest in public participation, and 2) the alleged failure of the public participation experience generally and in Canada specifically. In the first case, the literature clearly indicates that the 'public participation movement' has received support and encouragement from governments, the general public, and academics¹. That the growth of public participation is clearly increasing has prompted at least one writer to observe that " public participation is here to stay " (O'Riordan,1977:15). Thus, the topic of the study has apparent topical and practical relevance.

In the second case, several students in the subject area have alleged that the Canadian participation experience to date has been less than successful. These allegations have taken several viewpoints. Some are more critical than others but all indict the practise of public participation. Sadler (1977:1), for one, maintains that public participation in Canada has met with, at best, uneven success. In a similar vein, Rose (1974:ch.XI) claims that the success of Canadian public participation programmes is questionable. Krause (1968:142), Seaver (1968:66-67), and Kasperson (1977:10-13) have reached similar conclusions regarding public participation

in the U.S.A. In fact, Moynihan (1969) claims that the highly touted U.S. War on Poverty was a complete disaster.

Criticism of public participation programmes has also emerged from both public participants themselves and from sponsoring government agencies. On the one hand, 'citizen critics' claim participation mechanisms are often "no more than window dressing". On the other hand, agency skeptics see growing public participation as an alarming erosion of decision-making efficiency and power (Sewell, 1977: 2).

These two sources can be seen to form the basis of three possible contributions of this study. First, there is a practical contribution. That is, if public participation is here to stay but has generally failed, then it is important to attempt to suggest ways of devising more effective participation programmes for the future. The most consistent demand upon social scientists, in this area of study, is to recommend ways of improving upon participation experiences of the past.

Achieving the goal delineated above could be facilitated by the utilization of analytical models. Not only has public participation apparently failed in a practical sense but academics have also failed in a theoretical sense. For while the literature on participation is voluminous and interesting there has been a conspicuous lack of coherent, articulated theoretical frameworks in analysis (Damer and Hague, 1971:223; Seley, 1973:109-110; Sadler, 1978:2), especially in the Canadian context². This is not to

say that the work done is not important and provocative, but that³
the issues raised are not based in specific theoretical approaches .

Many practitioners in the field have claimed that theory is not necessary (Paget,1976:4). There is an obvious fallacy here. At a general level, all human action has some underlying theoretical assumptions which guide that action (cf. Berger and Luckmann,1967). Practitioners specifically, consciously or not, are guided by some set of assumptions and beliefs about the world around them (Pruger and Specht,1969:123). To aid in suggesting ways of improving future actions past events must be analyzed; but to do this effectively requires explicit theoretical statements which make clear underlying assumptions and define relationships⁴ between discrete, concrete events .

Elucidation of analytical frameworks can aid not only in understanding the practise of public participation but can also contribute to theory itself. Applying theoretical models to specific concrete cases has the potential of enhancing and/or modifying theory. In the case of public participation, the clear articulation of theory would be an initial step in addressing a serious problem in the field. Thus, the second possible contribution is theoretical in nature. For instance, the two basic explanatory frameworks to be employed will be derived from socio-political theory which has engendered considerable debate in sociology generally, and the 'sociology of public participation' specifically. This study does not presume to put that debate to rest but, hopefully, it may shed light on some of the issues in this controversy.

The third contribution of this study is purely academic and is related to the methodology to be used. Much of the work done in the area, as indicated above, has not utilized specific, analytical models. In the tradition of the subject area, this study will be a case study but a case study with a difference. First of all, it will be a theoretically grounded case study. Secondly, a technique underutilized in sociology will also be employed - that of content analysis. To the author's knowledge content analysis has never been used in public participation research. Consequently, the methods used will benefit from the flexibility of the case study and from the statistical precision of content analysis. All too often scientific research relies on only one methodological technique.

In sum, the problem which this study wishes to address is eminently practical. There has been an observed and consistent failure of public participation programmes to live up to expectations. The problem is further compounded by a conspicuous lack of theorization in the field. This lack of theoretical articulation could very well be a major reason for the shortcomings of practice. Furthermore, theoretical deficiencies could, in turn, lead to the lack of comparability and generalization of research.

As such, the potential contributions of this study form a continuum from the purely academic to the purely practical. While the major impetus for the study is a practical one - an attempt to determine ways in which the perceived failure of the

public participation experience can be overcome - gaining an understanding of the public participation experience will be greatly facilitated by the use of theoretically-derived, analytical models. It is at this point that a 'unity of opposites' apparently obtains. Although theory appears as a purely academic concern it is required if effective practical suggestions are to emerge. The true spirit of scientific endeavour is in the systematic use of theory to explain human, and other, events in the hopes of improving the human condition. Moreover, the unique methodology used may provide insights for future research techniques, which is a purely academic concern. Although, the whole range of contributions converge in the methodology. For as Diesing (1971:259) notes, a theoretically grounded case study has the potential benefits of enabling comparability, enhancing and modifying theory, and applicability to practise.

Definition of Public Participation

It is opportune, by way of delimiting the scope of the thesis, to define the term 'public participation'. One indication of the confused state of the subject area, alluded to earlier, is the "jungle of meanings" attributed to the notion of public participation (Kasperson, 1974:3). A variety of meanings can be, and often are, concealed in the single term 'participation'. Saram (1970:35-36), for example, has noted that participation can take on at least four general connotations. This in itself may

account for much of the conceptual vagueness in the subject area.

Clarifying the notion of public participation may be best accomplished by asking, and answering, two questions: " participation in what? " and " participation by whom? ". Cunningham (1972:595), in a review of several definitions, suggests that there are three common elements in public participation: common amateurs, decisions, and power. That is, it is participation of common amateurs with more or less power in a decision process which generally defines public participation.

Answering the question of 'participation in what' appears relatively simple - participation in decisions. This simple answer, though, only begs the question. Decisions can cover an extremely wide variety of affairs and involve many contexts. It is decisions concerning community-wide affairs which will form the substance for analysis in this study. This corresponds to the general 'kind' of participation referred to by Saram (1970:35) as " participation in a wider system ".

Decisions which involve community affairs ordinarily consist of " substantive, significant choices " (Cunningham, 1972:595), comprising mainly physical and social changes within affected communities (Rose,1974:9-10). Quite often such decisions are taken within formal political structures.

The concept of community used here must be taken in a broad sense, and will correspond to the jurisdictional area of a particular political or governmental level. The community affected will grow in size as the level of government involved

moves from municipal⁵ through regional and provincial to national and international⁵. This geo-political definition of community will allow broader generalizations concerning public participation.

Some examples may help to clarify the concepts defined above. Urban renewal and development decisions can and do affect towns and cities as wholes or parts therein. The case to be analyzed in this study had direct regional consequences and some, if nonetheless vague, provincial ramifications. The Berger Inquiry is an example of a national participation programme which involved a much wider geo-political community. The point here is that the decisions taken in each case: 1) meant significant physical and social changes, 2) affected the affairs of a particular community as a whole, and 3) were taken within a formal political decision-making structure.

" Historically, the most widespread aspect of (public) participation has been the use of the ballot-box " (Head,1971:15). As Salisbury (1975:323) has noted, a large portion of study concerning participation " has centered around the electoral process ". Although voting behavior and activity has attracted much attention in both the subject area and in the area of political sociology, it is extra-electoral participation which will be the focus of analysis⁶. Thus, the first component of the definition of public participation to be used in this study is participation in formal government decision-making structures beyond voting in elections.

The second element in the definition of public parti-

cipation to be used here will be demarcated in an answer to the question " participation by whom? ". This study will focus upon the activities of common amateurs - i.e. non-elected, non-appointed groups and individuals from the community in question.

A distinction must be made at this point in order that an important participatory technique is not eliminated from the purview of this research. Quite often governments appoint groups and individuals as members of public advisory committees as a means of obtaining public input. Governments in many cases also hire and appoint individuals to " recommending agencies " such as the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) of Alberta. Agencies such as the CRTC and ERCB essentially become organizational and administrative devices to facilitate public participation, as do public advisory committees. In both cases members are appointed but in the agency case the organizational structure is, at least, intended to be permanent and members tend to become essentially government employees. Whereas, in the committee case, members tend to be appointed on an ad hoc basis and in situation-specific contexts. It should be noted, however, that this 'non-appointment' stipulation is not intended to eliminate the 'public advisory committee' type of participation from analysis. Thus, the second component of the definition of public participation to be used in this study is participation by non-elected, non-appointed groups and individuals who are not part of an on-going government agency. In simple language,

'ordinary citizens'.

A third suggested component of the definition of public participation is "power". Many definitions of public participation contain a power element. Arnstein (1969:216), for one, claims that public participation is defined by power alone. Other definitions specify that there must be some degree of control by the public in the decision process (BMR, cited in Burton, 1977:5, for instance). In fact, almost all definitions of public participation make some mention of power or control. In addition to Arnstein's 'ladder of public participation' (see footnote 3), Pateman (1970:57-70) distinguishes among pseudo-, partial-, and full-participation. Burke (1968:288) defines five strategies of public participation, and Selznick (1949:220) distinguishes between 'substantive participation' and 'administrative involvement'. Farrell, Malin, and Stacey (n.d.: 15-24) define seven types of participation. In each case above, the distinctions made by these, as well as other, authors are on the basis of power or the degree of control held by the public in the decision process.

There are two basic problems with using power as an element in the definition of public participation. First, in many cases it appears that control by the public is desirable rather than a defining characteristic. That is, the public should have some degree of control and not that the public does have any control over decisions made. Amount of control, in many cases, reflects a range of opinion rather than description (Aleshire, 1969: 371; also see Sadler, 1978:2).

The second problem has to do with the nature of the concept of power. A perusal of definitions of power shows something of a consensus - a rarity in sociology. Power is "invisible" and refers to the ability to influence the actions of others⁷. If we cannot observe power directly and if power is the ability to influence action, then power is indirectly observable in the outcome(s) of action. In other words, that a group or an individual has power in a particular action is problematic - a question for investigation and thus inappropriate in a definitional sense.

In general, we must analyze the outcomes of action in order to determine sources and amounts of power and control. In the subject at hand, then, we must analyze the outcome of a decision process in a participation episode to determine whether or not the public actually was able to influence that decision.

By the above I am not denying the importance of power in analyzing or explaining participation. All indications are that power carries much weight. All that is being said is that the degree of control by the public is an empirical question. For example, if a particular participation programme is heralded as a model of public participation but the participating public has no impact upon the decision taken, then are we to exclude such an incident from analysis? Experiences in which, in fact and/or by design, the public has no control can provide as much or more insight into explanation as situations where control is obvious.

In addition, the two basic axplanatory approaches to be utilized define what should be the appropriate degree of public control - i.e. power is a variable. In doing so, power becomes one of the major questions for research. As such, the degree of control cannot form part of the definition of public participation.

In summary, the conception of public participation to be used in this study conforms basically to what Burton (1977:6) suggests is the 'narrow' definition. Public participation will be taken to mean the activities of non-elected, non-appointed members of a community within the formal decision-making structure in any of several levels of government in Canada. As such, the scope of this study will be somewhat limited in that only formal public participation will be included. The power element commonly attached to public participation is 'disregarded' because it is more appropriately a question for investigation rather than an assumption to be made.

The Case

The specific case to be investigated in this thesis involves the processes surrounding a government of Alberta decision made in 1977. On July 18, 1977 the government announced a decision to build a flow regulating dam and reservior on the Red Deer River. This river impoundment was intended to substantially alter the flow characteristics of the river. Additionally, several farm families and thousands of acres of farmland would

be directly affected. Moreover, according to government officials, the dam would have a substantial affect upon the whole river basin and would indirectly affect the entire province of Alberta.

In keeping with an overall policy of rapid economic growth and industrial decentralization, and also for more specific reasons, the government of Alberta made the decision to locate a dam on the Red Deer River⁸. The government held formal public hearings regarding the proposed dam in accordance with regulations in the Environment Conservation Act of Alberta (see section 3 of the act). Public hearings were held under the auspices of the Environment Conservation Authority of Alberta (ECA - now the Environment Council of Alberta). These hearings were convened in Noember of 1975, later adjourned, and then re-convened in March of 1977.

The ECA hearings provided the main formal source of public input. In fact, the ECA was created, in 1970 by a Social Credit government, specifically as a formal vehicle for public participation in environmental decision-making in Alberta. Those participating in the hearings represented several groups who had either direct or indirect interest in the dam location: farmers of the area, industrial concerns, sporting enthusiasts, environmental conservationists, and the like.

Participation in the Red Deer River decision also took other forms. Prior to the hearings the Alberta Department of the Environment (DoE) undertook extensive investigation of the Red Deer River basin in the form of feasibility studies and various impact studies. Part of the formal organization of these studies

included a public advisory committee (PAC). The official function of the PAC was to provide public input into the direction of the DoE studies.

A third source of public input came from the use of questionnaire surveys. One survey was carried out by the Red Deer Regional Planning Commission (RDRPC), another was done by social scientists contracted by the DoE, and two others were done by consultants to the ECA. Thus, input from individuals and groups who were not part of the on-going formal decision-making structure within the government of Alberta came primarily from three sources - public hearings, a public advisory committee, and surveys. Although, it is the first two components of the decision process which will be the primary focus of analysis in this study.

Methodology

In the chapter which follows two 'models' of public participation will be described⁹. These two frameworks will be derived essentially from 'consensus' and 'conflict' social theory and from 'elitist' and 'participatory' political theory which combine to form what are termed the 'elitist' and 'conflict' approaches in the 'sociology of public participation'. The two are models in the sense that they are theoretical approaches to be utilized as explanatory devices. Given the apparent failure of the Red Deer River episode (see footnote 9), and the Canadian

experience with public participation generally, explanation is required. That is, explanation is required before any suggestions for the future can be given if those suggestions are to have any theoretical validity. In the true scientific spirit, explanation can only proceed from theory.

The two frameworks to be delineated could be categorized as " pattern models " (cf. Diesing,1970:ch. 10). They are pattern models in that each implicitly and explicitly describes a 'pattern of events' which should take place if the premises and propositions of the theory reflect reality. Thus, each points to particular kinds of information required 1) to explain the events of a specific human action and 2) to support or refute the claims made by a particular theory or approach¹⁰. The analysis of the case then becomes an attempt to discover any pattern(s) from the information collected. Any patterns discovered will become the basis of any practical and/or theoretical conclusions and implications.

There are two basic methods used to test hypotheses derived from the analytical models - case study techniques and content analysis. Each method is intended to complement the other. The case study techniques involve the use of both strictly case-specific materials and historical materials. Such case materials were collected from several sources: 1) government legislation, 2) government debates, 3) government reports, 4) newspaper accounts, 5) other studies, 6) proceedings of the public hearings, and 7) personal interviews with those involved.

Content analysis of the proceedings of the public hearings comprised the other method of data collection. A more detailed account of both methodologies is contained in chapter Four.

Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of this study is 'definitional' in nature. That is, it is activities which fall outside the definition of public participation used here which is the main limiting factor. Specifying formal political mechanisms removes several important types of participatory activities from the scope of the thesis. First of all, the definition used eliminates the activities of a great many voluntary organizations. Although the contribution to Canadian society of groups such as the Kinsmen, the Y.M.-Y.W.C.A., and others cannot be underestimated, it is phenomena of this type which fall outside the definition of public participation.

More importantly, the definition of public participation excludes activities which could be termed 'informal participation'. By informal participation is meant attempts to influence public policy through means other than formal public participation mechanisms. The literature concerning community power structure is replete with such episodes (see for example: Hunter, 1968; and Keynes and Ricci, 1970). Also included in this category would be participation of the 'Saul Alinsky' type. Finally, the scope of this thesis does not take into account the significant

influence of 'social movements'. These informal forms of participation can certainly have a tremendous influence on the formation of public policy and on political decision-making. Thus, this study is limited in that it will consider only formal public influence rather than the whole range of public influence possible.

Format of the Study

The remainder of this thesis is comprised of eight chapters. In the chapter immediately following two analytical models will be described. Chapter Two is intended to address the problem of theoretical deficiency in the 'sociology of public participation'. These two models are built from the major 'modes of thought' gleaned from the participation literature.

Chapter Three will contain a short historical account of the dam decision. As events of the Red Deer River affair will be described in more detail in the analysis chapters, Chapter Three is intended to give the reader a 'feel' for the sequence of events which took place in central Alberta between 1973 and 1977. This skeleton will be fleshed out in later chapters.

The techniques of data collection used in the study will be explicated in Chapter Four. Case study collection procedures and the process of content analysis comprise the specific content of Chapter Four. Both methodologies have difficulties but do complement each other quite well. Further discussion of

methodology will also be found in Appendix A. Hypotheses derived from the theoretical perspectives will also be articulated in Chapter Four.

Chapter Five and Chapters Six through Eight will present and analyze the data collected. While Chapter Five will present the elitist case Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight will evaluate the claims of conflict theory. Each chapter will attempt to determine the empirical validity of hypotheses derived and, thus, make an overall assessment of the utility of each model. From these evaluations it is hoped that particular practical and theoretical implications will emerge.

Chapter Nine will consider the implications derived from the analysis undertaken. A very important aspect of those implications are suggestions or recommendations for improving upon public participation in the future. It is believed that the analyses in this study will also have overtones with regard to the specific analytical models utilized and for sociological theory generally. Lastly, suggestions for future research will also be made in recognition of the deficiencies of this study itself. It will be these various implications which will bestow any significance on this thesis.

In conclusion, the tasks of this thesis can be summarized as follows: the theory underlying the major efforts in the area of public participation will be articulated, followed by the operationalization and testing of derivative hypotheses in a somewhat unique manner in the hopes that some practical

recommendations for improving the practise of public participation in the future will emerge.

Notes

1. Academic interest is clearly indicated by the appearance of (1) anthologies of writings (see Draper, 1971 and Ley, 1973, for example), (2) bibliographies of case studies (see Stinson, 1975 and Burton and Wildgoose, 1977, for example), and (3) scholarly journals and professional associations (the Journal of Voluntary Action Research and the Association of Voluntary Action Scholars are examples).
 " During the 1960's and early 1970's (governments have) introduced a variety of programs with the general, if none the less vague, purpose of promoting (public) participation " (Loney, 1977:446). The inclusion of public participation opportunities in legislation (see the Planning Act and the Environment Conservation Act of Alberta, for example), the creation of public bodies as vehicles for public participation (the Environment Council of Alberta is an example), and the plethora of government studies about public participation (see Farrell et al, n.d.; Ontario, 1972 and Olsen, 1976, for instance) are indicative of government commitment to at least the concept of public participation.
 The growth and evolution of public participation in Canada and all of North America is well documented (see Cunningham, 1972:591-594; Ontario, 1972:2-4; Draper, 1977 and Kasperson, 1977, for example) and attests to growing public acceptance and demand for public participation.
2. Some notable exceptions are Simmie (1974) and Bryant and White (1975), both of which are 'non-Canadian' works.
3. Most of the work done has been of the case study, 'anecdotal' variety (Seley, 1973:109); studies by Granatstein (1971) and Fraser (1972) are examples. Other work in the area has been mainly: 1) discussions presenting arguments for and against public participation (see Goldblatt, 1968 and Aleshire, 1969, for example), 2) typologies of participation (the most notable example being Sherry Arnstein's (1969) "ladder of citizen participation"), and 3) analyses of techniques of participation (see Farrell et al, n.d. and Burke, 1968, for example).
4. It is apparently appropriate to make a distinction at this point. What is proposed here is a sociology of public participation and planning as distinct from a sociology in participation (cf. Buttimer, 1971:173-174). Of concern is theory and analysis of the process itself rather than theory and analysis concerned with phenomenon within the process. Faludi (1973:4) makes a similar distinction between

procedural and substantive theory. Sociology in public participation and decision-making is mainly concerned with the role social science, or any science for that matter, plays in the process rather than with an examination of the process itself. Horowitz (1970) and Silver (1972) provide examples of sociology in decision-making.

5. There is an assumption implied here which is that decision-making structures are generically similar processes. Decision-making and its terminological surrogates - planning, policy-making, etc. -, regardless of government level, are essentially a series of decisions examining what is and what should be (Lindblom, 1959; Faludi, 1973:4 and Paget, 1976:7). Although there may be different actors involved and varying end-products (especially in terms of specificity) any decision-making structure contains essential and similar characteristics. These similarities are more fully discussed in Chapter Two in a discussion of the stages of the planning process.
6. O'Riordan (1977:3) has suggested that voting, as a major participatory act, is paradoxical. Voting not only fulfills a citizen's electoral right but also traditionally is regarded as indicating disenfranchisement from any further direct inclusion in political affairs.
7. The following are representative definitions:

Goldhammer and Shils: A person has power to the extent that he influences the behavior of others in accordance with his own intentions.
(cited in Mott, 1970:5)

Weber: In general, we understand by 'power' the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action.
(1966:21)

Cartwright: The power of O over P, as we conceive it, is concerned with O's ability to perform acts which activate forces in P's life space.
(1959:193)
8. The Red Deer River case is especially interesting in relation to allegations regarding the failure of public participation, mentioned earlier. Allegations of success or failure imply evaluation. Sewell (1977:6-15) provides an excellent review of public participation evaluation techniques. Generally, there are two approaches to evaluation: 1) agency-centered, and 2) citizen-centered, although the majority of evaluations done are agency-oriented (Kasperson, 1977:11). From an agency point of view, success is attained if public participation aids in avoiding delays in plan implementation (Damer and Hague, 1971:220-221). If public wants, desires, and interests form part of a final decision, then in general terms the participation programme has succeeded from a citizen point of view. In the Red Deer River case it could be easily argued that neither of the objectives implied above were achieved. First, a second set of studies and hearings were required which delayed the final decision by

- almost two years. Secondly, when a final decision was taken a large number of the public involved in the process were vehemently opposed to that decision. Thus, from either point of view the Red Deer experience could be deemed a failure. A further indication of problems emerged within weeks of the Red Deer River decision. Following the Red Deer events legislation was passed (Bill 74) which effectively brought an end to the ECA as it was originally conceived.
9. By model is meant an explanatory or analytical framework. A model is a logical system of concepts, definitions, and propositions and their relationships designed to explain reality (Ward,1974:39). Furthermore, a model or perspective presents a 'picture of the world' as shared by members of a scientific community (Kuhn,1970:viii). Finally, models are abstract, conceptual patterns from which testable hypotheses can be derived. Hypotheses are tested to determine the extent to which the model matches reality and, thus, explains specific, concrete events.
 10. As Granatstein (1971:xii) points out, " theory is elucidated to explain the actions of people ". Research and analysis has a dual purpose, reflecting practical and theoretical concerns. Explanation of human action has practical significance in terms of prediction and, thus, suggestions for future action (cf. Chambliss and Ryther,1975:ch.2). There is simultaneous theoretical significance in that theoretical claims are either refuted or gain support with the weight of empirical evidence used in explanation.

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Chapter 2

The Models

Introduction

In this chapter the two major alternative theoretical frameworks or analytical models for explaining the practise of public participation will be presented. The problem here is quite simply stated - all too often work in the subject area, especially the large volume of research, does not clearly articulate theoretical underpinnings¹. This chapter will attempt to rectify that problem. Despite the noticeable lack of theorizing, the apparently diverse notions about public participation can be grouped into two broad perspectives². Each approach is 'constructed', in the tradition of ideal-types (cf. Weber, 1963), through a review of the literature which draws together various works which share more or less the same theoretical orientation. Quite often the theoretical orientation of a particular piece of literature is more implicit than explicit³.

Each approach derives from social and political theories which have long and rich intellectual heritage in the social sciences. The descriptions below will not dwell at length on the intellectual and philosophical traditions of each perspective for that would not serve the purposes of the study. Rather there will be brief indications of the theoretical sources and an attempt to translate the 'grand theory' into approaches in the 'sociology of public participation'. The basic task, then, is to identify the relationships between the grand socio-political theory and approaches in the sociology of public participation.

Elitist Approach

What follows is a description of one way of explaining public participation. This particular perspective will be referred to as the "elitist approach", although the terms 'traditional' and 'consensus' have been used interchangeably with 'elitist'. The notions making up this perspective derive essentially from the consensus theory of society and the theory of representative democracy. These socio-political theories are 'traditional' in that they occupy the mainstream of North American social and political thought; they are also termed 'consensus' as that label is ordinarily used to indicate an assumption and/or emphasis on the consensual nature of the social order. They are 'elitist' in that the theory of representative government posits necessarily elitist political

arrangements. To avoid confusion the approach described here will hereafter be referred to only as the 'elitist model'.

Although the grand theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of this approach will be articulated, it should be noted that it is their application to describing and explaining the practise⁴ of public participation which is of paramount importance .

Social and Political Theory

What has come to be known as consensus social theory has been attributed mainly to the work of Talcott Parsons, certainly one of the most influential North American sociologists in the discipline's short history. Parsons' theorizing, in turn, is based to a large extent upon his interpretations of the work⁵ of Emile Durkheim . One of the basic philosophical premises of the elitist approach is that of the "Hobbesian man". Men are seen as basically egotistic, anarchistic, and self-seeking. That an agglomeration of such men would be in a " state of chronic war " appears rather evident (Durkheim,1933:3). So that such a war is not constanly active, men must submit to some higher authority; give up some liberty so all can survive (Aron,1970:42). This higher authority is seen as a set of moral values which, if followed, will produce a stable society. It is in a stable society organized around a distinct set of moral values that the 'Hobbesian problem of order' finds resolution.

It is this set of moral values which, to a large

extent, forms the conceptual basis of consensus theory (Parsons, 1966:6). The moral or normative character of 'human worlds' sets them off from the world of nature. A particular set of moral values not only expresses the character of a collective of men (a society) but also is " the very source of purposive conduct " (Giddens,1976:93). These values are generally abstractions which become concrete in norms - i.e. situation-specific standards for behavior (Demerath and Marwell,1976:37). Norms define the roles which individuals, in a particular society, must perform if stability is to be achieved (Durkheim,1933:42-43). These norms must be followed, for in a differentiated society no man is sufficient unto himself (Aron,1970:23-24). Moreover, it is assumed that there is general agreement amongst the members of a society upon that set of norms and values - Durkheim's collective conscience (Parsons,1966).

Another concept basic to the elitist viewpoint, already alluded to above, is that of "equilibrium". Equilibrium, in an abstract sense, is achieved in the functional interdependence in modern society (Parsons,1966:8-9). Each part of society is dependent upon the adequate functioning of all other parts because of an increasing division of labor. The life of society as a whole depends on the adequate or proper functioning of all parts - i.e. equilibrium. In the words of the preceding paragraph, each individual must perform his/her roles adequately if equilibrium and stability are to be achieved. Subsequently, society takes precedence, in terms of needs, over individuals

(Horton,1970:155).

Emphasis on stability and role performance are the major characteristics of the theory of representative democracy (Dahl,1970). In order that the political sector of society maintains its equilibrium - i.e. functions properly - political tasks must be performed by capable individuals. Thus, for several reasons political institutions must be commanded by elites⁶. As modern society has evolved a highly differentiated and specialized division of labor, political roles have evolved similarly. As such only a few are equipped to assume the responsibilities related to complex public issues (Milbraith,1965:143 and Armstrong, 1972:302). Furthermore, 'innate' tendencies in the majority of men (Sartori, cited in Evans,1972:149) or organizational imperatives (Michels,1962:52), or both, compel elitist political arrangements. In this case, by elites is meant those individuals possessing the abilities and attitudes necessary for the " successful operation of democracy " (Berelson, cited in Pateman,1970:6). These individuals, it is held, are few and far between.

Consequently, involvement of those not possessing the requisite skills for rational, informed decision-making will only serve to destabilize the political system. Given the propositions contained in the consensus notion of societal equilibrium, lack of stability in one sector of society will have overall unbalancing effects. To maintain political and societal stability " decisions should be made by a few skillful

and wise leaders who are sensitive to the values of the public at large " (Olsen,1976:22).

In a political system ruled by a minority of leaders, democracy is achieved through the 'competition of elites' for political leadership (Schumpeter,1950:269). These elites are then called upon to act in the public interest, which emerges as the definable outcome of the competitive struggle for political leadership (Thayer,1972:12). The public interest thus obtained represents the overall value set of a particular society.

Equal political opportunity is also seen as an important aspect of democracy in this view. On the surface it appears unattainable in a complex of political institutions which are ruled by a minority of leaders. Two factors are claimed to be concrete evidence of equal political opportunity in an 'elitist democracy'. On the one hand, universal suffrage is most often cited as the means to equal opportunities (Pateman, 1970:14). Moreover, the public has a 'veto-right' over undesirable leaders; the electorate can remove leaders from office through appropriate voting. On the other hand, in the fact that every citizen has equal access in influencing decision-makers in inter-electoral processes, of which public participation is but one, equality of political opportunity obtains (Merton, 1957:419 and Dahl,1968).

In summary, the above has sketched the basic propositions

of two major modes of social and political thought: the consensus theory of society and the theory of representative government.

It must be emphasized that each is much more complex than appears above, but the main premises, assumptions, and tenets have been delineated. In particular two notions or concepts characterize consensus theory and the theory of representative government - role performance and stability. These and other ideas, concerning the nature of man and the public interest, lead to the basic elitist proposition: that political or public decision-making structures are and must be elitist in nature. The elitist perspective presents " a vision of society managed not by common people, but by 'experts' or enlightened leaders who are highly informed by expert advisors " (Comack,1976:37).

What follows will be a description of the elitist perspective of public participation indicating its relationship to consensus theory and the theory of representative democracy. In this discussion reference must be made not only to public participation but also to its related activity - public decision-making or planning.

Planning

To understand the role of public participation deemed appropriate by the elitist perspective, it is imperative to comprehend the elitist view of public decision-making or planning⁷. For, as was stated at the outset, it is participation

in public decision-making which has defined the parameters of this study.

In very general terms planning is simply a series of decisions from which some action alternative is determined. The outcome is supposed to indicate the best method of achieving some given goal or objective (Lindblom, 1959 and Grabow and Heskin, 1973:106). This process is seen to consist of three basic stages: 1) identification of objectives, 2) identification of alternative modes of action, and 3) choice of the best mode of action for achieving the objectives identified (Davidoff and Reiner, 1962: 103). That is, it is a question of means and ends - choosing the most suitable means for achieving given ends. In carrying out this task, planning is viewed as an apolitical, rational, and technical process; planning is basically a thinking process (Paget, 1976:15).

Traditional planning emerged, at least in part, from the notion of 'scientific management' championed by Frederick Winslow Taylor (Tugwell and Banfield, cited in Friedmann, 1973: xiii). For Taylor, at least, the goals to which he applied the 'scientific method' were assumed and unquestioned - increased productivity and profit (cf. Rinehart, 1975:41-49). Taylor, and his followers, went on to study work and its setting in order to devise ways by which productivity and profit could be boosted.

Modern scientific planning has proceeded in a similar manner. Goals and objectives of a particular planning or

decision-making process emerge from 'higher' overall goals. The ends or objectives to which planning addresses itself are deduced in logical, rational fashion: " ends are handled by a process of goal reduction in which alternatives are deduced in logical form from the major value premises of society " (Paget,1976:47). As such, planning goals become more and more concrete.

Overall planning objectives are, more often than not, taken for granted. It could be assumed that society organizes itself around major values which are known (consensus theory). Or in a similar manner, it could be assumed that the values of the public at large are made known through the electoral process (the theory of representative government). These public values, whatever they may be, are the most general, overall goals to which planning addresses itself.

It is interesting to note that the major goals of planning are typically defined in 'economic terms' (see Goodman and Goodman,1957:chs. 2,3, and 4). Generally, the notions of economic growth and efficiency dominate (Harvey,1973:97). Planning is seen as a means of aiding market mechanisms, indicative of this 'economic bias" (Robinson; Webber, cited in Paget,1976: 16). Gans (1969:35) and Kaplan (1973:14-15), for example, note that city planners historically have been most concerned with the economic viability of the urban setting. In more concrete terms, increased tax base and the short-run profitability of escalating land values are often cited as objectives in urban

renewal and development, for instance (see Wolpert et al,1972, for example). Most often it is assumed that overall economic objectives are the 'major value premises of society'.

Assuming that overall public values are known, determined by either means identified above, has two significant implications for the planning enterprise. In the first place, planning itself remains an apolitical, technical venture (Marcuse,1976:270). Secondly, these overall goals can be defined as the public interest; and, above all else, planning claims to serve the public interest (Horowitz,1970:340 and Simmie, 1974:120).

The objectives of any specific planning process are rationally deduced from the overall goals of some identifiable community. This goal reduction process does, and must, take place objectively: in a thinking process "cleansed of all subjective distortion and all personal involvement" (Roszak, cited in Grabow and Heskin,1973:108).

Not only are objectives deduced in a scientific, value-free, and objective fashion but the mode of action is also chosen in a similarly apolitical fashion. With the ends identified, decision-making need only be concerned with the application of rational, scientific intelligence to devising means by which those 'taken-for-granted' ends could be most efficiently achieved (Fromm,1972). Planning is to be concerned mainly with "buildings, motorways and pipelines rather than with social purposes" (Reade,1968:215), for those social

purposes are taken as given.

With objectives identified, the other two stages of planning become highly technical procedures. It is simply a matter of choosing the most suitable action(s). " Major planning questions (become) matters of choice between various technical methods of solution " (Breitbart,1974:45). Planning is the application of scientific intelligence and methods to the determination of those means which will most efficiently achieve the objectives (values) identified. The means chosen then serve the public interest.

Furthermore, it is assumed that the efficiency of the planning process will be compromised if any but those best equipped to make public decisions are involved. Assurance that the best course of action will be chosen is achieved if those with technical expertise and those with, what could be termed, 'value expertise' - i.e. planning and political experts - retain control over the planning process (Friedmann,1969:316 and Skeffington,1969:5).

To summarize, then, the above discussions have identified three main personal qualities necessary if planning roles are to be adequately performed: those involved must be skilled, highly motivated, and must possess a sensitivity for the public interest - qualities it is assumed are not generally diffused within the general public. Involving those ill-equipped to make public decisions will jeopardize role performance imperatives, which can only lead to instability in the political system;

and, therefore, in all of society (cf. Almond and Verba, 1963: 240 and Pateman, 1970: 1-14).

Public Participation

Robert Aleshire (1969:369) has noted that any programme for public participation will reflect "one's view of the citizen and his role in society". The literature is filled with references to the majority of citizens which certainly reflect a 'Hobbesian' view of the citizenry. Very often the public is portrayed as apathetic, incompetent, and self-interested; a portrayal which it is claimed has the support of empirical evidence (Sadler, 1978:2)⁸. Given these characteristics, public involvement in political affairs must be low key and "can be ... advisory only" (Breitbart, 1974:45).

This 'Hobbesian' picture of the public is not, however, extended to include all members of society. A particular group of individuals are not characterized by this view of the citizenry. Specifically, the personal qualities described above are not characteristic of society's "elites". It is only the 'apolitical stratum' (Dahl, 1970:77-84) who are possessed of 'Hobbesian' attributes. Standard research within the elitist perspective has found one very consistent relationship - people of high socio-economic status are more likely to be engaged in 'higher levels' of political activity (Orum, 1978:289). This empirically descriptive result is then explained in terms of the

differential possession of politically essential, personal attributes.

Because of the consistent link between SES and political activity, the perspective being described here has also come to be known as 'the Standard Socio-economic Model' (Verba and Nie,1972:ch.8). The standard SES model basically claims that those of high socioeconomic status participate more often and at 'higher' levels. High levels of political activity refers to both the number of political acts engaged in and to the degree of 'difficulty' of different political acts. Those persons of high SES also display certain personal political attitudes related to high levels of political activity.

The usual method used in testing the standard SES model begins by defining a typology of participatory activities based on the reported political activism of a sample of citizens. Milbraith (1965:18), for example, defines a "hierarchy of political involvement" comprised of four categories of activity: gladiatorial, transitional, spectator, and apathetic. Verba and Nie (1972:79-80), on the other hand, utilized a typology made up of six classifications: complete activist, campaigner, communalist, parochial participant, voting specialist, and inactive.

Surveys have been conducted using neighborhood (Bell and Force,1956), national - i.e. U.S. - (Verba and Nie,1972), and international (Almond and Verba,1963) populations. Individuals surveyed are then sorted into appropriate categories according to

responses to involvement questions. Analysis of groups making up the various participant categories finds that those in the 'high activity' tiers (gladitorial, complete activist, etc.) possess the following social and personal characteristics: (1) high levels of education, (2) high incomes, (3) prestigious occupations, and (4) particular psychological political orientations (specifically, high interest in politics, competence, and a community-wide outlook).

To know that, in fact, most of those who become involved in political decision-making are 'elites' is of little use in itself. More important, is the question of why this is the case. Elitist theorists give two basic, inter-related answers. First, elites or those of high SES, possess the role requisites in terms of the political orientations described above. Second, differential possession of required political characteristics is the result of differential socialization (Zureik and Pike, 1974:3-51). As noted by Zureik and Pike (1974:18-19):

This line of argument is reminiscent of the 'culture of poverty' ... what is implied in the ... discussion on values-cum-politics is that the working-class child is surrounded by a culture and a value system which make it difficult for him to develop the skill(s) needed to engage in political participation.

The imperatives of political and societal stability mean that a great many citizens must be involved in political decisions to a very low degree. This argument and the 'Hobbesian' view of the ordinary citizen are explicated in more detail below.

(a) self-interest:

Extensive public participation in decision-making is deemed unnecessary and ill-advised in the initial stage of planning - identification of objectives. There are two basic reasons for such a stance. The first, implied in earlier discussions, is that either political experts know what overall objectives should be pursued or that everyone agrees on what those objectives are. This argument is a logical extension of the assumptions of value consensus and the 'competition of elites'.

More importantly, there is a second line of argument here which is related to overall planning objectives or values: a line of reasoning predicated upon the view of a self-interested citizenry. There is a dual thrust to the 'self-interest argument' emerging from separate disciplinary traditions.

The first, emerging from sociology and political science, sees a lack of self-interest as a necessary political value (Orum, 1978:206). Those highly involved in political decision processes must possess what has been variously termed a 'public-regarding ethos' or 'civic-mindedness'. This is a notion made popular by Wilson and Banfield but which could easily be traced to Plato's conception of "philosopher-kings". Limited public involvement is justified in the fact that the majority of citizens, especially the poor, do not possess a 'public-regarding ethos', requisite to making decisions in the public interest (Wilson, 1968:51).

Inherent in the elitist view of planning is the notion that there is one common good which serves the interests of all (Warren,1972:376). According to the elitist point of view the 'average' citizen has a very narrow perspective and, thus, cannot comprehend the "common good". The requisite ethos includes a desire to seek for the " good of the community as a whole (which implies ... the necessity of honesty, impartiality, and efficiency) "; and the good government results from efficiency, a strong executive, and so on; in other words a " middle-class, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant ethos " (Banfield and Wilson,1963:40-46).

Banfield and Wilson (1963) and Verba and Nie (1972) provide examples of research conducted regarding the 'ethos' aspect of political attitudes. Banfield and Wilson claim their theory of public-regarding ethos was supported through a comparison of the political institutional arrangements and "class status" of several large U.S. cities. They found that cities which were predominantly populated by lower-class immigrants were given to " old value " political styles. The major characteristic of an old value political style was a view which saw politics in self-interested terms - that is, political institutions were a means of achieving personal rather than community goals (pp.330-331). These values or styles correspond to the " impulse-following " versus " impulse-renouncing " tendencies in lower-class socialization (Klien, cited in Zureik and Pike,1974:16)⁹.

In their study, Verba and Nie found that of those who

contacted local government officials, individuals of high SES were most likely to be concerned with "educational" matters whereas individuals of low SES were more likely to be concerned about "basic economic" problems. They also discovered that contactors on educational matters most often referred to the community (76%) rather than self/family (13%) or other miscellaneous groups (11%). Those who made contacts regarding basic economic problems more often than not referred to self/family (pg.280). The conclusion implied and made was that those of low SES are more self-interested than those of high SES. This conclusion is very much in the tradition of the 'culture of poverty' in that it, at least, implies that lower-class people are so caught up in everyday problems of survival (i.e. basic economic problems) that they are not able to make community-wide decisions.

The second way in which the concept of self-interest is used appears in the planning literature. Traditionally, it is held that a planner is best suited to make community development decisions because of his/her use of 'objective' techniques and his/her professionalization(Barr,1972:8).

Because planners use objective, scientific techniques concerned almost totally with technical activities - that is, with the aim of ensuring the best use of resources by reconciling competing claims for their use - they do not promote any particular interest, least of all their own (Reade,1968:215). The 'planner as planner' has nothing personal to gain in making a particular decision and,

therefore, is not hindered by self-interest. Professionalization of planners, it is held, also ensures an 'objective' perspective among planners (Marcuse,,1976). Planners appear to exclude other people, by definition, from their activities.

The implication of the above discussion is that by involving self-interested individuals the planning process will only become sluggish and will result in endless debate and, ultimately, inaction. These individuals lack an awareness of the public interest which is, it is assumed, the overall objectives of a specific planning programme. In this regard public participation should be restricted to a programme of education (Draper,1977:1-7; Kasperson,1977:6). The public needs only to be made aware of the overall goals that a specific plan aims to achieve and they will not resist the action alternative chosen. Connor's (1977:4-5) review of public participation techniques in Canada and the U.S. supports such a claim; for he concludes: " lists of techniques emphasize means of getting the agency's views over to the public ".

(b) incompetence:

Using the stages of the planning process as a framework for discussion, we see that the initial stage - identification of goals - is, and must be, completed without substantial public involvement. Public participation in the second stage - identification of alternative action options - should also be limited

because this stage, in particular, requires specialized skills. Ordinary citizens, as research has shown, do not generally possess the necessary competence. The concept of competence, or incompetence, is used in at least three ways in the elitist literature.

In the first case, the sense in which the term 'competence' is used in much of the research concerns the "belief in one's competence" or a sense of political efficacy (Dahl, 1970:81-83). This self-confidence is seen as a key political attitude (Almond and Verba, 1963:294). Political self-confidence is most often seen as a result of differential socialization (Orum, 1978:294). At any rate, a sense of political competence is ordinarily found to have a strong correlation with high levels of political activity.

Competence, in the use outlined above, is usually measured through some type of self-rating device. An index is constructed of two or more items which consist of questions like: How much influence do you think people like you can have over local government: a lot, moderate amount, or not at all?; and, If you had some complaint about a local government activity and took that complaint to a member of the local government council, would you expect him to pay: a lot of attention to what you say, some attention, very little attention, or none at all? (Verba and Nie, 1972:370). High rating on such an index ordinarily correlates strongly with high SES and high levels of political activity. In this sense, a high level of competence refers to a feeling regarding one's ability to influence political decision-

making.

There is a second way in which the concept of competence has been used which is relevant here. The approach described above is characteristic of research undertaken by sociologists and political scientists. Planners and the planning literature have used the term in reference to technical competence.

Limited public participation in the second stage of the planning process is necessary because the scientific-technical intelligence requisite to complex planning problems is not generally diffused amongst members of the public (Lindblom, 1959; Friedmann, 1969:312). Some empirical evidence has been gathered which, it is held, supports this claim (see Bell and Force, 1956; Sigal, 1967; Crain and Rosenthal, and Edelston and Kolodner, cited in Spiegel and Mitterthal, 1968(a):8-10, for example).

To make efficient decisions those involved must be familiar with density patterns, transportation matrices, and so on, which requires extensive technical training (Spiegel and Mitterthal, 1968(b):134-135). Thus, by definition, the majority of any community will be excluded, with the possible exception of those who are highly educated though not necessarily in the field of planning. Citizens, by and large, can provide some information, or can "mumble a few meaningful words", but it requires highly skilled technicians to analyze the information gathered to solve planning problems (Aleshire, 1969:370). The abstract nature of political and planning decisions requires

'problem-solving' skills not found amongst the general public, especially the lower classes (Hess and Torney, cited in Zureik and Pike,1974:17).

Roberta Sigal's (1967) research is illustrative of research using competence in its technical sense. She studied a community action committee's (CAC) activity in school planning. The CAC produced a school plan although the plan was basically that of " inside experts ", not ordinary citizens. They (the citizens) suggested some minor ideas but the substance of the plan was that of the experts. Sigal concludes: " at the risk of appearing anti-democratic, I would like to suggest that it is naive and even cruel to expect the inarticulate masses to devise urban renewal schemes, library plans, ... " (pg.50).

A third aspect of the public's lack of competence has been defined by R. Dahl (cited in Pateman,1970:9-10). A prerequisite to a stable democracy is consensus on political norms or " rules of the game ". Involving large numbers of individuals who either do not know those rules or do not agree on those rules could create a highly volatile situation; and highly volatile situations are certainly less than stable.

(c) apathy:

Finally, public participation should remain at a low level because most just do not want to become involved. North American society is characterized by a disinterested

polity (Pateman,1970:8). The low voter turnout characteristic of elections is held up as evidence of apathy in the first instance. Any recent election, from municipal to national, can attest to a lack of political interest, and the trend appears to be one of steadily increasing apathy. Several students of public participation have noted that political interest, beyond elections, is all the more difficult to sustain (see Skeffington, 1969:11; Zimmerman,1972:206 and Dahms,1975:3, for example). A very recent example is contained in the findings of the latest Edmonton Area Study. It was found that of those most directly affected by urban development, 73% did nothing to make their views known about that development (Kennedy,1978:11).

As with competence and self-interest, the other major research finding is that individuals of high SES are less apathetic and more interested in politics (Milbraith,1965: 53-54). Apathy is especially prominent among the poor and unorganized (Salisbury,1975:326). Saul Alinsky, who is certainly not a traditional community organizer, has been very cognizant of the necessity of high levels of political interest (1971:120).

It follows, therefore, that two basic conclusions have emanated from research on apathy. First, attempts to involve large numbers of individuals who do not want to participate is essentially a fruitless exercise. Secondly, a consistent suggestion has been that " the most we can expect is that (the average citizen) ... will ask to be heard if an issue comes along that greatly concerns him " (Milbraith,1965:145). Robert Dahl

(1968,1970) has extended this notion to 'subleaders' - that those other than political experts will become involved only in issues directly affecting them.

The implication of involving large numbers of apathetic citizens is that unnecessary strain will be placed on the decision process. If large numbers of apathetics participate only sporadically, the decision process will be unnecessarily extended and opposition will be generated (i.e. instability). On a societal scale, democracy requires a certain amount of apathy in order to function properly. As Almond and Verba (1963:240) have claimed:

balance ... is needed for a successful democracy: there must be involvement in politics if there is to be any sort of democratic decision-making; yet involvement must not be so intense as to endanger stability.

Summary

Given the above theoretical and empirical propositions, the elitist model emphasizes low level public involvement. Minimal public participation is a prerequisite for societal stability. The apathy, incompetence, and self-interest of the majority of citizens, when involved to any great degree, will only lead to the generation of vetoes. The ultimate and inevitable outcome of such a state is confusion and stalemate in which no action will emerge - i.e. instability (Bryant and White,1975:

41-42). In hypothetical terms, as the extent of public participation increases so will the degree of instability in the decision-making process, in terms of delays, time, energy, and money.

The hypotheses implied by the elitist model could be diagrammed as follows:

FIGURE 2-1

ELITIST MODEL



For the political decision-making process to function smoothly participants must be highly motivated, well-trained, and civic-minded. In other words, role performance capacities and stability are the most important factors in analyzing political action generally and public participation specifically.

Thus, public participation should be limited to:

- 1) providing experts with information for analysis and/or
- 2) communication of planning objectives and procedures to the public. Public participation could, conceivably, take place in all three stages of the planning process. In Stage One the public could be informed as to the overall goals of the specific planning exercise. The public could provide experts with some information in Stage One but certainly in the second stage, that of identifying alternative modes of action. Information would

be analyzed by the experts and used in determining alternative courses of action. Finally, the public could express opinions regarding preferences of alternatives identified but the final decision authority must rest in the hands of the experts. These assertions rest on the basic assumption of the need for stability and the fact that " the electoral mass is incapable of action other than stampede " (Schumpeter,1950:283). Moreover, any failure ascribed to a particular public participation programme is typically attributed to the inadequacies, as pointed out above, of the public participants.

Conflict Approach

The second analytical model to be applied to the Red Deer River case is that which will be referred to as the " conflict approach ". This approach focuses on the social and political structures surrounding public participation rather than on the personal attributes of individual participants. It should be noted that the conflict model, as described below, has been referred to elsewhere as the " structural " or " dialectical " model of public participation.

This alternative approach is labelled the 'conflict perspective' as it derives from that theory of society commonly known as conflict theory. Emphasis on structural rather than personal variables has encouraged the structural label; whereas the philosophy of dialectics inherent in conflict theory and the

vision of a dialectical planning process provides the source of the third label used to connote this approach to public participation. To avoid confusion, the label "conflict" model will be used exclusively throughout the remainder of this thesis and it will refer to the analytical framework described below.

Not only does the conflict approach have a separate and distinct intellectual history but it is also born from a critique of elitist theory, as outlined above. Although conflict theory does have this separate history it has not been well accepted by the academic community until its recent "rebirth" (Panitch,1977:1). This has been especially so in North America. Several authors have noted that due to the practical and theoretical inadequacies of elitist theory an alternative theory is required (Pateman,1970; Thayer,1972; Kasperson,1977). The conflict perspective attempts to alleviate shortcomings of the elitist approach as well as to focus on a different set of variables. Criticisms of elitist theory, as made by conflict theory, will be indicated as elaboration of the conflict approach proceeds.

Social and Political Theory

The social theory and philosophy from which the conflict approach derives is most often attributed to the work of Karl Marx. As with the elitist approach, some misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Marx by his followers may have occurred,

but for the purposes of this thesis any such misinterpretation is entirely an academic question. Despite varied interpretations, all place an emphasis on 'process', 'power', and 'conflict'.

The main philosophical premises of the conflict approach is based on a 'denial' of the traditional view of the nature of man. This alternative view sees the nature of human beings in 'developmental' rather than 'innate' terms. Man's nature is in flux and constantly in a state of becoming - i.e. consciousness (man's nature) follows being (Marx,1959:43). It is in his social being that man's nature takes form.

It is at this point where the initial divergence of conflict theory from elitist theory takes place - " the ontological emphasis of the former (is) upon man as producer, as creator, an emphasis which stands in stark and dramatic contrast to Parsons' fascination with the 'problem of order' " (Giddens,1976:99; emphasis in original). In productive, creative activity men both realize and transform their own nature. That is, it is man's ability to transform raw material from the world into useable products (i.e. creativity) that expresses his nature (Fromm,1961:24-43). These products once created then 'act back' upon man and transform man's nature, especially in the social relations which are concomitant to the productive act. As Giddens (1976:100) puts it:

Human beings, unlike the lower animals, are not able to exist in a state of mere adaptation to the material world. The fact that the former do not possess an inbuilt apparatus of instinctual responses forces them into a creative interplay with their surroundings,

such that they must seek to master their environment rather than simply adjust to it as a given; thus human beings change themselves through changing the world around them in a continual and reciprocal process.

The distinction here is between creativity and adaptation, or 'Subject' and 'Object'. Man is Subject, not Object. Man's basic " ontological vocation ... is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world ... this world ... is not a ... given reality which man must accept and to which he must adjust " (Friere,1970:12-12). Creativity, in turn, implies control.

Men are Object in that they are born into an ongoing network of social relations but human being is dependent upon man's ability to alter those relations in accordance with the realization of human potentialities. As such there is emphasis on change and freedom as autonomy, rather than on order and stability (Horton,1970:158). The problem for society is not control of man's innate tendencies but rather is to provide individuals with autonomy and self-determination. Horton (1964) has described this as an 'immanent' conception of society as opposed to the 'transcendental' conception of society implied by elitist theory.

That all men may not have the same potential connects the philosophy above to the main tenet of the conflict model. If all men do not have the same potential then it follows that their interests, desires, and needs may be different. Subsequently, society is seen as being made up of individuals and groups who have different and often opposing interests rather than similar values.

It is not implied above that men do not agree on what may be worthwhile, as human values, to pursue. Most do agree that freedom, liberty, happiness, dignity, and so on are paramount human values. Disagreement does emerge when such abstract notions are concretized: there can be varying concrete interpretations of those general principles and/or varying evaluations of society's achievements in attaining those values (cf. Marchak, 1975:ch.1). From the point of view of conflict theory, it is the social relationships which men must act within that provide the main source of constraint in the attainment of human potential. This notion stands in bold contrast to the emphasis on individual inadequacy as posed by the elitist model.

One of the basic assumptions of several social theorists indeed has been that society is made up of individuals and groups with different and competing interests. This competition often leads to conflict, sometimes open and violent, sometimes repressed and non-violent. For Marx (1959), conflicts arose from inadequate social organization, in terms of social class, for supplying the needs of individuals in society, whereas Dahrendorf (1959) saw conflict resulting from the structure of authority relationships in society.

In either interpretation above, most cases of conflict will be marked by an unequal balance of power (Rex, cited in Simmie, 1974:ch.3). It is suggested that an unequal balance of power then restricts the ability of some individuals and groups in realizing their needs. The research in the area of community

power structures, for example, has shown that indeed some groups possess more power in influencing public decisions and, therefore, in realizing their needs and interests - to the extent that public decisions enhance or restrict need satisfaction - (see Miller,1958; Schulze,1958; Hunter,1968 and Clement,1975, for instance). Moreover, any inequality, and attendant conflict, will only be intensified by a situation of unequal power. If all are to realize their needs, develop their unique individual potential, an equality of power is prerequisite.

Furthermore, conflict theory, in claiming that an equal distribution of power is necessary in society is, at least, implying that such a situation does not exist. In other words, the structure of social relationships in modern society is such that certain groups (or interests) tend to realize their needs over and above others. Because of the primacy of productive relationships (cf. Marx,1959), economic interests tend to dominate. That is, in conflict situations, which are endemic to society, individuals and groups linked to economic interests tend to see their needs realized over and above others in the outcomes of those conflicts (cf. Chambliss,1973; Marchak, 1975 and Quinney,1979:1-8). It is this conclusion, regarding the primacy of economic interests, which has been reached in the community power research referred to above (also see Lorimer, 1972). The ascendancy of economic interests can restrict the development of the potential of other groups and individuals.

An emphasis on development, rather than stability,

is also a major point in the theory of participatory democracy. Direct participation in public decision-making is partially a learning process; that is, it has an essential educative element for both individuals and society. This notion of 'learning by doing' can be traced to Rousseau (1908) and J.S. Mill (cited in Pateman, 1970:31-36). A primary goal of direct participation, in this view, is the development of a morally responsible, self-determining individual.

This educative component of participation is obviously linked to the philosophy assumed by the conflict approach - that men should be Subject not Object. It is through participation that individuals become subjects not objects in decisions which affect them and the world they live in. Through participation individuals can gain the ability to transform their world in accordance with their needs and the development of their individuality.

That is not to say that political activities will become all-engrossing. Public affairs will simply be one 'productive activity' of the multi-faceted activities of men. Participation in public decision-making, though, must take place regularly and with impact; there must be creativity in political activity. Adaptative political activity reduces the ordinary citizen to a passive role in 'life-affecting' situations. An active political role implies control in those activities which, in turn, suggests mass- rather than elite-based political arrangements. It is only through creative

political participation that the socially responsible individual will emerge (cf. Marx,1978:16-25).

This brings us to the second major tenet of the theory of participatory democracy: that of a "negotiated public interest". If society is arranged around competing interests rather than value consensus then the public interest cannot be known 'a priori'. Moreover, if individuals and, therefore, society are in a constant state of development then that which will aid in satisfaction of multiple needs cannot be assumed to be known. Finally, if the existing system of representation is less than adequate, again, the public interest must be discovered not assumed. Given these assumptions, then, the public interest must somehow be negotiated amongst those competing interests (Alinsky,1941:802; Kasperson,1974(b):36).

First, all interests must be recognized as legitimate (Dahrendorf,1959:241-279). Secondly, and more importantly, there must be some form of bargaining amongst those interests. Meyerson and Banfield (1955:306-312) have argued quite forcefully that bargaining can only take place in a situation of an equal balance of power. It is argued that equality of power is prerequisite to compromise, and it is through bargaining and compromise that it is possible to discover a course, or courses, of action that will, hopefully, serve all interests to the greatest extent. Although, it must be recognized that because of the variability of human needs and potentialities that a single course of action may not be at all desirable.

It cannot be assumed that equality of power or political opportunity exists. Without continuous and direct public participation in public decision-making, certain interests may easily go unaccounted for. Again, research in the area of power structures, from local to national levels (see earlier references), has shown that economic interests tend to dominate over other legitimate needs and interests. Political arrangements need not be controlled by elites, although administration of political arrangements cannot be carried out on a mass-basis. Given the above, it is argued that the so-called 'innate' tendencies observed by elitists are rather a reflection of existing structural relationships.

At base, demands for participation connote dissatisfaction with the existing system of representation (Damer and Hague, 1971:220-221; Head, 1971:17). It appears that many people have lost faith in representative democracy because of increasing centralization (Morris and Hess, 1975:ch.1), lack of representation (Cunningham, 1972:590-596), and/or the lack of responsiveness of government (Audain, 1972). The result has been the emergence of increasingly large numbers of " political spectators " (Kasperson, 1974(a):5).

In summary, there are several propositions in the social and political theory sketched above which have implications for an alternative approach to public participation. It must be noted, however, that the outline presented above is, indeed, a sketch. The skeletal propositions presented thus far derive from a body of theoretical and philosophical thought much more

complex than the above would indicate. Nevertheless, there have been identified several major and essential concepts which form the basis of the conflict model of public participation. These include notions of developmental progress, conflicting interests, and power. The remainder of this section of Chapter Two will follow the same format as was used earlier - there will be an elucidation of the conflict view of planning, the role of public participation, and their relationships to the theories outlined above.

Planning

The first implication of the conflict theories, and from which flow many of the following propositions, is in an alternative view of the planning process. Planning is seen here as being as much, or more, a socio-political process as it is a technical process. Planning is one means by which the goals, values, interests, and needs in society are 'worked out' or concretized. But it is not assumed that these values are known beforehand or that they can be arranged into neat, agreed-upon hierarchies (Paget,1976:47).

The notion of a negotiated public interest implies a critique of the essentially "consensual public interest" contained in the elitist perspective. The 'consensual' view of the public interest has been severely criticized (see Friedmann,1971; Smith,1973:279; Simmie,1974:121-126 and Paget,

1976:47-51). This criticism is twofold: 1) that society is not made up of individuals in basic value agreement but rather is made up of individuals and groups with different and often opposing values and interests, and 2) deducing the public interest from general societal values " assumes a level of knowledge, a stability and strict ordering of values, that in practise is rarely achieved " (Paget,1976:47).

The point is that the internal logic of the goal reduction programmatic may not be inconsistent but that the reduction process rests upon a faulty or problematic assumption. If the major value premises of society cannot be known a priori, neither can the public good. In all likelihood a process similar to 'goal reduction' would take place but in the opposite direction; the public interest must be discovered through discussion and negotiation between 'private' needs (cf. Evans,1972:144-150).

Debate over 'value-choices' means that all interests must be included in public discussions. If all interests are not fed into the process there is the very real danger that some needs may be 'glossed over', and that objectives or decisions may be imposed in an inequitable fashion. Experts, for instance, may share a common outlook very different from other socio-economic groups which lead to very costly decisions (Broady, 1968:14; Kennedy,1975:4 and Kelly,1976:5-13). The urban renewal movement has provided, over the years, many concrete examples of the disastrous effects of imposed solutions (see Wolpert et al, 1972:ch.2 and Michelson,1976:76-81, for example).

Feeding all interests into the planning process has several implications. First, the objectives or goals of planning may not be simply economic ones. Goals such as clean air, clean water, choice of lifestyle may take precedence over short-term profitability and growth¹⁰. All too often planners and planning have opted for purely economic goals- goals which may not serve the best interests or needs of the general public. Economic planning goals have served to maintain the status-quo (Marcuse, 1976) and have been class-based (Gans, 1969:35). In effect, planning for people is viewed as unprofitable and is therefore not done (Kuenzlen, 1972:26-27). In this respect, a notion of a negotiated interest implies two things: 1) that all interests are fed into the planning process with equal force, and 2) that social justice be an overriding goal in aiding the already disadvantaged (cf. Harvey, 1973).

Second, the overshadowing importance of establishing a negotiated public interest does not mean that planning has no technical aspects. All that is implied is that the scientific intelligence required in the planning process is not paramount. Planning experts will still engage many of the same tools but goals cannot be taken for granted.

Moreover, the various stages of the decision process, especially the 'objective-identification' and the 'action-alternative-identification' stages, must exist in a "dialectical relationship". Through the analysis of courses of action objectives, for instance, may change; that is, though analytically

separable goals and action, values and facts must be discovered together (Grabow and Heskin,1973:110 and Simmie,1974:169). This course of simultaneous discovery does not mean that there are not separate stages in the planning process. What it does mean, in practise, is that the planning process must remain extremely flexible. There must exist the possibility of moving to a preceding stage, to begin anew, in the light of new information. This may mean returning to the objective-identification stage because of events taking place in the action alternative stage, for instance. Flexibility also means that all alternative courses of action must be investigated and discussed.

The planning process described above has been labelled cumbersome and inefficient by traditionalists (see Zimmerman,1972:206, for example). Inefficiency seems to be a major concern of the elitist approach as seen in complaints that mass-based decision methods will only produce a 'sluggish' process. What is missing in these assertions is a definition of the term "efficiency". It appears that quite often efficiency is used in such a way as to connote only 'speed'; that is, it seems that the goal is a planning process which moves at a brisk pace and "gets things done".

This argument/definition of efficiency is inadequate on at least two counts. First, if efficiency is defined rather as "cost-avoidance", the process described above could well have the affect of reducing costly planning errors (Hall,1969:169, and Thayer,1972:20). In fact, it may be beneficial to replace the

concept of efficiency with the notion of effectiveness. Second, there is empirical evidence that participation increases efficiency, especially in the worker participation literature. From J.S. Mill to Hawthorne to Yugoslavia, one consistent finding is that participation increases productivity (efficiency) (Parry,1972: 34).

The basic implication of this view of planning is the necessity of high levels of public involvement. To properly identify planning goals (the public interest) all of the public must be involved. The public interest must be discovered in a juxtaposition of the needs and desires of all members of a particular community. As such, involving only a few in the process, as the elitists would have it, opens the distinct possibility of overlooking the needs of all but a few.

Public Participation

Public participation, within the conflict perspective, is seen as an essential component of the planning process. First of all, " public participation offers opportunities for individual growth and self-fulfillment " (Rickwood and Tillack,n.d.:24). Public participation is a means by which individuals can develop according to their individuality and potential. It also provides one medium for the development of moral responsibility and community perspective. In fact it could be argued that planning is an essential component of public participation rather than vice versa.

On a more pragmatic level public participation is an obvious way of arriving at a negotiated public interest. It is a means by which those previously excluded from public decision-making can have their interests taken into account.

A negotiated public interest requires a balance of power. The requisite balance of power is seen as attainable through an extensive public role in planning (Lorimer,1970; Kasperson,1977:10-13). There must be high rather than low levels of public participation. In the words of Philip Selznick (1949:220), there must be substantive participation rather than just administrative involvement. The role of the public should be more than one which simply informs and consults, rather it should be comprised of advice and consent (Burton,1977:21). High levels of public involvement are described by Arnstein (1969:216) as partnership, delegated authority, and citizen control, and by Farrell et al (n.d.:16-24) as consultation, joint planning delegated authority, and self-determination. This prescription of maximum public participation has further implications for 1) the meaning of public participation, 2) planning roles, and 3) the fact of public participation.

All too often, what public participation will mean in an actual concrete decision is left undefined or ill-defined. In much of the Canadian legislation, there are no specifications beyond some vague requirement for public input left to bureaucratic discretion (Lucas,1977:7-13). Much of the above is an initial step towards clear definition.

Ambiguity in definition and differential perception of what public participation will mean in practise has had negative consequences in the past. Moynihan (1968:168-170) points out that one of the major shortcomings of the U.S. War on Poverty was the range of meanings and attendant expectations attached to the phrase "maximum feasible participation" by the various actors. Rose (1974:115) reports that one of the major findings of his study was that neighbourhood residents and agency officials had radically different views and expectations of public participation. In fact, discussion regarding the roles and expectations of participation should probably be included in the initial stage of the planning process (cf. D'Amore,1977).

Alleviating ambiguity will mean, at least, specifying roles, points of entry of public participants, and the impact public input will have on the decision. Too often public participation holds out a "false promise". Citizens are led to believe they can have seious input into a planning decision, only to be left with no apparent effect. When an agency position does not substantially change through a participation procedure, many participants could easily feel 'conned'.

Rossi and Dentler (1961:191) have shown that the success of citizen participation in North West Hyde Park was, to a large extent, due to the fact that the citizens were able to modify planners' actions - i.e. the citizens had a definable impact on the outcome of the decision process (see also Granatstein, 1971 and Fraser,1972). Without some specification of the effect

public input will have in forming the final decision, public participation can easily become an ideological tool for cooptation (cf. Krause, 1968 and Loney, 1978).

Elitist claims and research findings regarding political efficaciousness are placed in a suspicious light when viewed from an alternative vantage point. Research by Almond and Verba (1963), discussed earlier, provides an excellent illustration of the difficulties. They claim that a sense of efficacy is strongly related to high levels of participation and favorable disposition towards the existing political system (pg. 206). They conclude that this sense of efficacy is necessary for proper political participation and that this value is inherent in particular individuals (those of high SES) and/or the result of differential socialization.

There is an obvious and equally valid interpretation of the findings regarding efficacy. If one finds that participation in political decision-making is successful, in terms of an ability to actually influence decisions, then it is not surprising that one would feel confident, would continue to participate, and would be favorably disposed to existing political arrangements. If a person actually can influence political decisions then it could be argued that that person apparently had some power over the outcome of the decision process - which is a proposition of the conflict perspective.

In fact, Robert Dahl has noted that an individual's confidence in his ability is related to one's success in the

political arena (1970:82-83). This observation is substantiated by several studies (Dahl cites Campbell et al and Alford and Scoble). However, he makes a conceptual leap to conclude that the initiating factor in the strength of an individual's sense of efficacy is found in "deeper personality factors", totally ignoring experiential and structural factors. Although, he does acknowledge the compounding affect of actual success in influencing policy decisions. Thus, the research findings regarding efficacy when related to a particular historical and structural pattern could provide support for an alternative explanation.

There are two further aspects regarding the implications for the meaning of public participation. First of all, public participation is necessary in all stages of the planning process, not just in the final stages as claimed by many adhering to the elitist approach (Olsen, 1976:113). Participation is especially important in the initial objective-identification stage. For it is here that decisions must be made which have ramifications for the entire process. It is the setting of objectives which provides the overall guiding principles for the remainder of the process.

If there is little or no participation in this initial stage charges of cooptation can quickly emerge. Participation in the final stages only actually coopts participants as it suggests that they agree with the initial objectives. Selznick (1949), Krause (1968), and Loney (1978) have shown quite well how participants can be coopted by joining the decision

process in the late stages. In such a situation public participation appears to perform a justificatory or legitimating role rather than a decision role. In fact, in Selznick's (1949) study of the TVA, one of the main points was the coopting function of merely 'administrative involvement', or 'late stage participation'.

Of significance here is the problem of the narrow perspective which ordinary citizens are alleged to possess. The notion of social training through participation forms a basic criticism of the work of Banfield and Wilson, mentioned earlier. These authors contend that empirical evidence shows that the majority of citizens do not possess a 'public-regarding' ethos. The public regarding outlook is rather found in those who rank high in income, education, or both, and in those who possess " a disproportionate share of organizational skills and resources " (Wilson,1968:50). These same people tend to participate more often (Zimmerman,1972). It is assumed, or implied, that those low on income or education have an inherent private-regarding ethos. An equally valid interpretation of their findings is that those who participate learn the requisite public-regarding ethos.

Research which finds that those of low SES and/or low on participation are more 'self-interested' totally ignores structural and historical patterns. The most often repeated claim is that lower-class citizens are too caught up in day-to-day problems (for example, Verba and Nie's (1972:274) basic economic

needs - see page 43 of this chapter) to have a community-minded perspective. The conclusion most often reached is that these people are thus not equipped to make political decisions. All we are really told here is that politics is a 'hobby' for the well-to-do. Because those of high SES are less concerned about basic economic problems does not mean they have any better understanding of community-wide problems. In fact, Verba and Nie (1972:284-285) conclude their chapter on policy preferences by noting that political leaders who rely on the preferences of activists (i.e. those of high SES) " would be receiving an inaccurate impression of the population as a whole ". The point here, from the perspective of the conflict approach, is that different people have different needs, and high socio-economic standing does not necessarily equip an individual to recognize, or be sympathetic to, the needs of others, especially those of different socio-economic standing. As Aristotle once said, " If you want to know how the shoe fits, ask the man who wears it ".

There is a further difficulty with the elitist notion of self-interest. The planning literature assumes that professionalization and scientific technique assure objectivity. To claim that planners are only interested in the " efficient allocation of resources " ignores a definition of the term 'efficient'. Efficient allocation of resources can mean many more things than the traditional economic definition. Defining efficiency in economic terms implies a particular value above other alternative

positions, and therefore places a particular interest in an advantaged position in a seemingly objective procedure. Secondly, to view the planner simply as planner totally ignores the fact that planning and planners are part of larger social relationships: this in itself can cast doubt on the notion that planners serve no interest (cf. Kuenzlen, 1972:25-27). There is also a growing body of literature, with a strong empirical foundation, which shows that scientifically determined physical plans certainly do incorporate particular social values (i.e. interests) (see Goodman and Goodman, 1947; Bolan, 1971 and Ziesel, 1974, for example).

A final point in clarifying the practical meaning of public participation concerns roles. The axiom of maximum participation implies a redefinition of planning roles, at least as they are seen by the elitist model. This redefinition claims that there are several forms of expertise required to make effective public decisions (Breitbart, 1974:44). The public, planners, bureaucrats, and politicians all can provide distinct, requisite forms of knowledge (Richardson, 1970:53). Some provide technical knowledge and information, others provide information concerning political, social, and economic costs of desired goals and objectives, and so on. This redefinition in no way denies the technical aspects of planning, only that the technical aspect is not paramount. Planning can be considered essentially technical only if the other forms of knowledge are assumed to be known, as in the elitist paradigm. It is certainly not imperative that technical knowledge hold authority for the final decision,

as implied by the elitist perspective.

This concern about roles, from the point of view of the conflict approach, points to two criticisms of the elitist assertion of public incompetence. One concerns the power of public participants, while the second points up the importance of information in the decision-making process.

Much of the elitist literature only assumes most people are incompetent, with little or no empirical support. Such an assumption is typical of the planning literature which concludes most citizens are incompetent because they lack technical training. Many attempts at empirical validation suffer the problem of not eliminating alternative interpretations. A study by Roberta Sigal (1967), described earlier, is instructive here. Sigal concluded that the citizens' committee failed because it was incompetent. But, she also tells us the citizens' committee was given freedom to plan except for budgeting, selecting a school site, or making its plans mandatory on the schoolboard: the committee " possessed ... freedom to plan and dream, it lacked ... power and responsibility " (pg.48). Again, another explanation of the citizens' committee failure appears. It may not have been only that those average citizens did not comprehend the issues but also that they had no control over the outcome of the exercise they were involved in.

Furthermore, there is no reason to expect the general public to be technical experts nor is there any reason to claim that they should be. If they were expert there would be no need

for planners. It is the role of the planner to be able to translate public suggestions into practical or operational - i.e. technical - modes (cf. Rickwood and Tillack,n.d.:24). Making competent public decisions requires information. If the public is to form competent opinions they require technical information which typically is not at their disposal. If planners and experts are to produce competent and relevant technical information they require information regarding public needs they would not find "in the office" (cf. Spatt,1971).

The points made above are easily summarized. The notion of public incompetence is often simply an assumption - several Canadian experiences show that the public are not incompetent (Fraser,1972 is an excellent example). Many public participation failures, attributed to public incompetence, can be shown to be due to a lack of public control rather than incompetence. Perceived public incompetence may simply be a lack of information. All these observations are included in the redefinition of roles described above.

The maxim of high levels of public participation has three further inter-related implications for the practise of public participation. All three implications highlight the concern for providing for the fact of public participation not just the opportunity for public participation. First of all, if people are expected to engage in public participation programmes there must be some quarantees of impact. In an immediate sense there must, then, be a change from the present sporadic, ad hoc arrangements

(B.C Man and Resources,1973:11-12). This means the creation of institutions or structures which actively encourage and solicit public input regularly. Present Canadian legislation provides participation opportunities but the organization and impact of those opportunities can occur within extremely wide variations of bureaucratic discretion (Lucas,1977:7-13).

Secondly, there is the question of resources. A re-interpretation of Banfield and Wilson's work, mentioned earlier, provides an important clue. For all intents and purposes they found a strong correlation between income, education, organizational skill, and participation. It could be argued that providing these resources to those initially lacking in them would be a step towards the fact of participation. Empirical support for this contention is found in Dorene Jacobs' (1971) analysis of the Annex Ratepayers Association in Toronto. She has shown that the success of this group was largely due to the financial, organizational, and other resources at their disposal. The opportunity to participate is rather meaningless if one is not in a position to take advantage of that opportunity.

Concomitant to provision of resources is the absolute necessity of access to information. The difficulties in obtaining information pertinent to a specific decision process are well known (see Baldwin,1976). The access to and flow of information is crucial if there is to be any balance of power and genuine participation (B.C. Man and Resources,1973:12-15). Information is power; and as was indicated earlier, information is necessary

for competent public decisions.

The conflict perspective does require a certain level of knowledge and responsibility on the part of the general public (Evans,1972:134). That this level of knowledge may not exist at present is not disputed, but it is claimed that this lack of knowledge is historically and structurally consistent. The social and political institutions which people face daily do not encourage, and probably even repress, participation. Under such a situation it is not surprising to find that the 'ordinary citizen' lacks certain levels and kinds of knowledge.

This brings us to a final criticism of the elitist paradigm which derives from the conflict approach. The elitist claims concerning apathy, socioeconomic status, and participation have, by far, the most empirical support. However, conclusions emanating from that research appear unwarranted.

First of all, the fact that " there is virtually no empirical study now available that does not show a reasonably strong positive correlation between SES and political participation " (Orum,1978:289), does not explain per se. All that can be safely concluded is that people of high socioeconomic status participate more and at higher levels of activity. Elitists then make a conceptual leap in that they claim that this observation indicates some 'natural state of affairs'. Because of differential socialization, lower-class people do not possess the right attitudes and must therefore be excluded from public decision-making.

In a general sense, it could be argued that " the reasons for non-participation are primarily structural rather than operational; ... they rest within the traditional political, social, and economic order " (Sadler,1978:6). Non-participation could be a legitimate response to a situation of a non-participatory society. The socialization research bears out this claim, in that upper-class individuals experience more "participatory relationships" than do others (Zureik and Pike,1974:18-20). The values or attitudes identified by elitists may have some significance in understanding political participation, but identifying and understanding institutional mechanisms which give rise to and sustain those attitudes is equally as important.

In a more specific sense, the historical plight of public participation mechanisms does provide insight into apathy. One has only to consider the years of frustration and defeat that many citizens have experienced, and an apathetic public does not seem so surprising (Pinker,1970:200; Snider,1972:1, 2,21). Many traditional theorists and researchers claim public participation is doomed because of apathy. If public participants are expected to expend time and energy in a process where they have no impact, it is equally argueable that it is the historical lack of impact (i.e. control over outcomes) and not some inherent deficiency which is the cause of apathy.

That the very essence of representative democracy requires an apathetic public points to a contradiction in elitist assertions concerning apathy. The basic contention of apathy

research is that a certain amount of apathy is necessary for the adequate functioning of democracy (Almond and Verba, 1963: 240). Empirical evidence for such claims is scant, ranging from anecdotes about "over-politicized states" (Milbraith, 1965: 147-149) to the fact that 90% of respondents to a survey were not concerned that their children married someone from another political party (Almond and Verba, 1963: 240).

There is no indication of what level of apathy is appropriate, except that the U.S. displays the 'balance' of politicization (Milbraith, 1965: ch. 6 and Almond and Verba, 1963: 239-243). There is still a problem in that political activism varies widely over time and space, if voter turnouts can be used as one indication. Voter turnout in U.S. presidential elections has varied from an average of 80% in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to 47% in 1972 (Orum, 1978: 277). Since the early 1900's, Saskatchewan has shown a much higher rate of voter turnout than other Canadian provinces (Courtney and Smith, 1972: 312).

In summary, the conflict approach to public participation claims that it is structural variables which lead to frustration, confusion, and inaction in a specific decision context. In hypothetical terms, confusion and conflict will result to the extent that public participation is minimized. This minimization can take the form of 1) a lack of discussion of objectives, 2) ambiguity over roles, 3) cooptation of participants, and 4) a lack of resources and information on

the part of public participants. Underlying all of this is a structurally-induced lack of power of public participants which, given varying and competing interests, will invariably lead to failure. The actual hypotheses implied by this theoretical approach and the methods of testing will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Conclusion

By way of summarizing and further clarifying the preceding discussions, the basic tenets of the elitist and conflict models can be organized as follows:

Elitist	Conflict
<u>Defining concepts:</u>	
stability value consensus role performance	development conflict structure power
<u>Image of man:</u>	
Hobbesian	'man the producer'
<u>Image of society:</u>	
transcendental	immanent
<u>Social and political theory:</u>	
stability societal needs elitist decision structures assumed public interest	development individual needs equality of power negotiated public interest

Planning:

technical process
'scientific management'

socio-political process
needs-satisfaction

Public participation:

personal prerequisites
low involvement

educational
high involvement

Notes

1. Such a situation would not appear perplexing to at least one author. Stephen Cole (1975) has argued that North American social science has shown a general lack of integration between theory and research.
2. The diversity of ideas about public participation is probably both a product and a cause of the lack of theoretical work.
3. This delineation of theoretical approaches may ignore some views of public participation. The intention is not to denigrate other approaches which apparently do not 'fit' into either of the perspectives thus described. All that is implied here is that the paradigms delineated characterize the major approaches in the subject area. An example of another view of public participation is that known as the 'exchange model' as found in orthodox economics (Bryant and White, 1975:38).
4. Articulation of the theoretical bases of this and the conflict approach could well raise issues of theoretical and philosophical dispute. It is not the intention to engage in such disputes as this would detract from the ultimate aim of this thesis.
5. It should be noted that some feel Parsons' work is based upon a misinterpretation of Durkheim (see Giddens, 1971, for example). Such a claim, accurate though it may be, is solely an academic question in relation to the purposes of this study.
6. Most elitist theorists see society as being composed of several elite groupings which are not 'substitutable' (see Clement, 1975:8-11 for a discussion of various elitist theorists). Of those elites, the model described here refers most often to a political or governing elite and to a non-governing, bureaucratic, technical elite.
7. In what follows the term planning will be used almost exclusively but will refer to decision-making, policy-making, and so on, for all are generically similar.

Although, it should be noted that a controversy exists among planners themselves concerning two conceptions of planning: the generic and the partial (see Reade, 1968 and Paget 1976). The substance of the dispute is contained in the differing views of planning expressed in the elitist and the conflict models described here: the elitist model sees planning as the technical part of decision-making (partial) while the conflict model views planning as decision-making (generic).

8. Pateman (1970:14) has noted that much of the work done within the elitist perspective is based upon empirical generalization (i.e. descriptive social science); a claim held in high regard by many adherents to the elitist framework.
9. To avoid engaging in debate regarding varying conceptions of 'social class', the term 'class' will refer to SES gradations when used in Chapter Two.
10. Although it could be argued that a clean environment is in the end an economic goal, if viewed over the very long term.

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Chapter 3

The Red Deer River Dam

This chapter is meant to give the reader a brief introduction to the specific case to be analyzed later. What follows is a sketch of the region and the series of events which led to a decision to build a dam on the Red Deer River. Much of what is presented here is elaborated upon later.

Besides acquiring a 'feel' for the people, the land, and the events, the reader is directed to a description of the 'dependent variable' in this study. Both paradigms presented in chapter two aim at explaining "political instability", in one sense or another. The elitist model places special emphasis upon the importance of stability for the adequate functioning of society whereas the conflict model speaks of instability but in

a different manner. The satisfaction of multi-variate human needs and the development of human potential is of major concern in the conflict approach. Barriers to development, in this second case, and ensuing reactions to those barriers, constitute the instability referred to by the conflict model.

In both cases, instability is characterized by frustration and hostility on the part of individual actors. The elitist model suggests this frustration and hostility result from cleavages created by improperly equipped political actors - i.e. 'too much participation'. In contradistinction, the conflict model posits 'too little participation' - certain public needs and desires glossed over by an inadequate participation structure - as the major factor in creating 'instability'. At any rate, the second task of this chapter is to clearly indicate the hostility (or instability) associated with the decision to build a dam on the Red Deer River.

The Red Deer River Valley

The Red Deer River basin occupies an area of 18,000 square miles in the central-southern portion of the province of Alberta. It is bounded in the west by the Rocky Mountains and in the east by the vicinity of Empress near the Alberta-Saskatchewan border. Contained in the basin are the counties of Lacombe, Red Deer, Mountain View, Kneehill, Stettler, and Starland, and portions of Improvement Districts #10 and #7.

The basin is comprised of a variety of geological

characteristics, as well as variations in topography, climate, and wildlife. The western portion of the basin includes fairly extensive tracts of crown owned forest and mountain land. In this western region, specifically in Banff National Park, lie the headwaters of the Red Deer River. Elevations vary tremendously from the foothills to the mountains. With this variation also come differences in wildlife and vegetation.

The central region of the river valley, known as the parklands, begins at the foothills in the west. This area is made up of much richer soil types, although they are more prone to erosion. The far-western portion of the parklands is mainly forest but as the river moves east it encounters a large portion of rich farming land. Although the western section of the farmlands are given mostly to forage and grazing, the central and easterly parts are comprised of excellent cereal grain soils.

The far-eastern region of the basin, the grasslands, is made up of semi-arid prairie. In this area the river slows considerably and low water levels are quite common. Lack of vegetation and more erodable soil types provide little protection from spring run-off and heavy summer rains. As a result, some of the area contains deep valleys characterized by the Badlands near Drumheller. Farming in this far-eastern section is restricted to low-yield agriculture because of the extremely low level of precipitation.

There are also a variety of natural resources exploited in the river valley. Agricultural land comprises a very important resource to the region. Much of the land in the basin is categor-

ized as classes I, II and III, which are excellent to good agricultural soil types. Livestock farming constitutes another very important land use for those areas which cannot support grain farming.

In addition to the agricultural surface resources there are several others. The western area has considerable timber stands which provide for some forestry operations, although logging for lumber has declined substantially with increasing human settlement. The several lakes, rivers and creeks of the area give the whole valley an excellent recreation potential. The most popular tourist area is, of course, the area within Banff National Park. But many areas outside the park provide other tourist attractions. The upper reaches of the Red Deer River include some of the best whitewater canoe runs in all of Canada; lakes such as Sylvan and Buffalo have fairly extensive cottage development; and the Badlands of Drumheller including the hoodoos and remains of the dinosaur era are well-known tourist attractions.

Oil and gas fields, and coal deposits comprise the major sub-surface resources of the region. Coal mining has a long history in the area, especially near Drumheller, but has been in a marked decline until recent years. Dwindling supplies of petroleum energy sources has renewed the interest in coal. The discovery of oil near the basin in the 40's and 50's has had a major impact on the basin. Exploration for and recovery of oil and gas products increased rapidly during the 60's. Oil and gas industries have remained in the area but growth has not reached the rates of

the 60's for "in general, the oil fields of Central Alberta... are medium and small in size" (RDRPC, 1969:15).

As implied above, agriculture constitutes the basis of the Red Deer River Basin economy. At the time of the Red Deer River dam proposal over 26% of the labour force were employed directly in agricultural pursuits (Gill and Murri, 1975:83). In addition, there were a large number of persons employed in industries providing services to this employment base.

As in the rest of Alberta, and Canada for that matter, the number of persons employed in agriculture was declining. This is evidenced by the steadily declining rural population of the area. From 1951 to 1971 the rural population of the basin area declined from about 68% to 44% of the total population (Gill and Murri, 1975:37). The main reason for this decline is the increasing 'industrialization' of farming. Over the years there has been a steady decrease in the number of farms and a concomitant increase in the size of farms (Land Use Forum, 1976:10). Even so, the economic base, in terms of employment, remains in agriculture.

Employment in the petro-chemical industries, which are of late apparently important in Alberta, is small. Only 2.2% of the area labour force were employed in those industries but this portion is larger than that for all of Alberta at 1.4% (Gill and Murri, 1975:83). The oil and gas industry appears to generate more revenue, though. In 1967, estimated revenue of the petroleum industry in the basin were \$135 million (approximately 15% of the Alberta total of \$890 million) versus \$63.5 million in

cash receipts for agricultural goods (approximately 11.5% of the Alberta total of \$755 million) (RDRPC, 1969:2-16). It is not clear, though, what portion of the petroleum revenue remains in the basin and the province as the major oil and gas firms are foreign-owned or -controlled. As indicated above, using an 'export employment' method of determining economic base, agriculture fairs extremely better than mining and petroleum with ratios of 36.8 and 2.5 respectively (RDRPC, 1969:60).¹.

The population distribution of the Red Deer River basin has been changing in a manner similar to the rest of Alberta and Canada. A trend towards urbanization has characterized Canada since Confederation. As mentioned earlier the rural population is declining. In absolute terms, the rural population has remained relatively constant - 54,401 in 1951 and 48,065 in 1971 (Gill and Murri, 1975:23). Thus, "the decline in the percentage of rural population has to be seen relative to the much more rapid urban growth" (Census of Canada, 1976:7). For example, Edmonton and Calgary have absorbed by far the largest portion of population increase in Alberta. The rural/urban split in the Red Deer River basin at the time of the Dam proposal was 44%/56% (Gill and Murri, 1975:23).

It is through this area of central Alberta that the last 'wild' river flows - the Red Deer River. Of all the major rivers south of major population centres in Alberta, only the Red Deer has not been regulated by some flow augmentation device. It was a proposal to build a storage impoundment facility on the Red

Deer River that gave rise to that series of events which are the specific subject of this thesis.

Government Policy

As will be seen later, some policies of the government of Alberta are important to the analyses to follow. Of major importance is the government's overall policy of rapid economic growth. Such a policy is not peculiar to Alberta. In all of North America an emphasis on economic growth is typical. The usual claim is that growth is necessary to maintain and upgrade the 'standard of living' enjoyed by North Americans - i.e. an emphasis on quantitative development (c.f. Goulet, 1971:85).

Though not peculiar to Alberta, a policy of rapid economic growth appears to have achieved a position of dominance to a degree not seen in many other 'industrialized' nations. In a 1974 speech, W.J. Yurko, Alberta Minister of the Environment, claimed that a policy of growth will reign in the foreseeable future (Speeches, 1974:200-201). The dominance of this growth policy has led at least one author to claim that there is an 'obsession' with growth in Alberta (Pratt, 1976:98).

The government of Alberta's stance regarding the Alberta tar sands is illustrative of the dominance of the goal of rapid growth. Even though Alberta's top civil servants claimed that the tar sands must be developed slowly and in a well-planned manner, the government decided on a program of extremely rapid development (Pratt, 1976). The government envisioned the construction of

some 20 tar sands plants between 1973 and 2000 (Speeches, 1974: 212).

Emerging from this overall policy of growth are three related policies important to this study. The first concerns a petro-chemical industry in Alberta. As the above example illustrates, the growth policy is aimed mainly at the petro-chemical industries (see also: Speeches, 1974:224). Exploitation of the mineral, oil and gas deposits is seen as the best means by which to achieve rapid economic growth. Given the 'world energy crisis', the short term growth potential of the 'energy' industries is extremely high. The government has actively pursued a policy of providing conditions favorable to the location of petro-chemical industries in Alberta (Rickwood and Tillack, n.d.).

A second related policy is one of decentralization. Recognizing the domination of Edmonton and Calgary as population and industrial centres in Alberta, the government announced in 1972 that one of its goals was to promote the decentralization of future population and industrial growth (Speeches, 1974: 224-227). Such a policy, it was held, would stimulate the economic growth of smaller centres which have 'stagnant or declining' economic bases.

The third policy related to economic growth concerns water resources. Water is one of the natural resources which is in abundant supply in Alberta. The government is pursuing a goal of water management which will "ensure the optimum realization of (Alberta's) social and economic objectives" (Speeches, 1974:175). Pursuant to these objectives it has been declared that water supply

shall not limit economic and industrial growth. Water resources will be utilized to encourage growth while at the same time recognizing the need to protect the natural environment and prime agricultural land.

It was in this policy climate that the Red Deer River dam proposal emerged. In June, 1973, the government of Alberta announced that, pursuant to its growth policies, it would study the possibility of constructing a flow regulation structure on the Red Deer River. The Red Deer River basin 'fit' all the requirements. The basin had oil and gas reserves, it had a fast growing urban centre in Red Deer, and the Red Deer River was subject to fairly wide flow variation.

It was the last characteristic, the flow irregularities, which was important. The Red Deer River is subject to rather wide seasonal fluctuations, as are most rivers. Low winter flows were seen as a highly constraining factor in municipal and, more importantly, industrial growth and development. Subsequently, it was deemed necessary to somehow augment the natural flow of the Red Deer River if Alberta was to achieve its economic objectives.

The Red Deer River Flow Regulation Planning Studies

In April of 1971 the Department of the Environment (D of E; or Alberta Environment as it is now known) was established to administer the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act in Alberta. This new department assumed the water resources and environmental health responsibilities of the Department of

Agriculture and the Department of Health respectively (see Appendix C). Included in those responsibilities was authority for approval to "construct any 'plant, structure or thing' which could possibly contribute to air or water pollution" (Environment News, 1971(1):6). Also included was a mandate to manage Alberta's water resources. Subsequently, the Red Deer River dam proposal fell within the jurisdiction of the infant Department of the Environment.

To aid in making a decision concerning a dam on the Red Deer River, the D of E organized a series of planning studies in early 1974. Originally, 12 potential dam sites were identified between the city of Red Deer and an area 90 miles upstream from Red Deer (i.e. west of Red Deer). These sites were "compared on the basis of preliminary cost, storage capacity, and degree of flow augmentation" (ECA, 1975(b):20). On the basis of these preliminary estimates 10 of the sites were eliminated. Sites were eliminated for deficiencies ranging from lack of the proper geological foundations to extremely high capital cost. Also eliminated from detailed study were alternatives to a dam, such as groundwater supplies, offstream storage, and inter-basin transfers.

Two sites were left for more detailed feasibility study. These sites were known as damsites six and seven. Damsite 6 is situated 15 miles west of Innisfail on the Red Deer River, between two of its tributaries, the Medicine and the Raven. Damsite 7, also known as the Raven site, is located 20 miles west of Innisfail near the confluence of the Red Deer and Raven rivers. Incidentally, site 7 had been studied in 1967-72 as a potential

damsite by the Water Resources Division of the Alberta Department of Agriculture under an agreement with the Saskatchewan-Nelson Basin Board.

Within the organizational structure shown in Appendix B the Minister of the Environment commissioned a series of twelve studies. These twelve studies were intended to provide comprehensive information concerning damsites 6 and 7. Contracts for these studies were let in February of 1974 at a cost of approximately \$370,000 (Environment News, 1974(3),7:6). Of the twelve studies, seven were contracted to private consultants with the remainder undertaken by various government departments. Each study focused on a particular aspect of, and impact of, the construction of a dam on the Red Deer River at either site 6 or 7, as follows:

- (1) municipal and industrial water demands - Department of the Environment;
- (2) hydrology - Department of the Environment;
- (3) feasibility and cost of damsite 6 - Klohn and Leonoff Ltd.;
- (4) feasibility and cost of damsite 7 - EBA Engineering Consultants Ltd.;
- (5) fish - Aquatic Environments Ltd.;
- (6) wildlife - Department of Lands and Forests;
- (7) water quality - Department of the Environment;
- (8) recreation - Synergy West Ltd.;
- (9) archeology - Department of Culture, Youth, and Recreation;
- (10) river regime - Associated Engineering Services;
- (11) sociological impact - Gill and Murri;
- (12) cost/benefit - Synergy West Ltd.

The terms of reference for each study varied somewhat, depending upon what particular aspect was being investigated, but in the main each was governed by similar guidelines. Each was to study the extent to which either damsite would achieve the

overall goals and objectives identified and/or make an assessment of the impact each damsite site would have on the environment, social life, and other aspects of the area (Alberta Environment, 1975(c):171).

These feasibility and impact studies were coordinated by the Environmental Planning Division of the Department of the Environment. The management committee (see Appendix B), made up mainly of government officials, was to make recommendations to the Minister. Those recommendations were to emerge from the comparison of sites 6 and 7 undertaken by the various studies. In addition, a Public Advisory Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee (see Appendix B) were appointed to provide public and technical input throughout the study period. More will be said about the Public Advisory Committee later.

The facility to be built was conceived, officially, as a multi-purpose structure. The impoundment was meant to meet the problems of: (1) low flows, (2) poor water quality, (3) flood and erosion, and (4) enhancement of recreation potential of the Red Deer River. There is no doubt that the Red Deer River was subject to low winter flows. The low winter flow did exacerbate quality problems in terms of dissolved oxygen content. The low flows coupled with high organic nutrient content (nitrogen and phosphates) from rural and urban waste did leave the river with a very low dissolved oxygen content during some winter months. Being in a 'natural' state (i.e. not regulated by man) the river did have a history of eroding its banks and it did pose varying flood threats. In terms of recreation, the basin's water resources

were fairly well-developed. But it was felt that a storage reservoir would create new recreation opportunities (the above are taken from Blench, 1975; Alberta Environment, 1975(a); Muzik and Card, 1975; Seifried and Lefrancois, 1975; and Synergy West, 1975).

The primary concern, however, was water supply. The Red Deer River suffered from wide flow fluctuations and, more importantly, from low winter flows (Seifried and Lefrancois, 1975:10). Although, the amounts of water which the river could supply more than met all existing demands and could meet projected municipal demands far into the future (pp. 11-33). It was projected future industrial demands which were of concern.

The water supply and demand study forecasted an extremely high level of industrial growth in the river basin area for the period 1974-2004: a total of 20 industrial (petro-chemical, coal-fired thermal electric, coal washing, and coal gasification) plants (p. 24). The basis of the industrial projections appear to be that they were "consistent with (1) resource availability - including water flows regulated by a dam - and (2) government policy" (Seastone, 1975:231; see also Seifried and Lefrancois, 1975:21-24). Important market variables were left unaccounted for in making these industrial growth forecasts (Seastone, 1975:229; Seifried and Lefrancois, 1975:22).

That an unregulated Red Deer River could supply the amount of water for projected industrial growth was extremely uncertain. Disregarding, for the moment, uncertainty in the

industrial growth projections, it was the water supply quandry which was of major concern to the Alberta government in making deliberations about the Red Deer River dam. As Dr. Seastone, the project's economic consultant put it:

the point made here is that a strategy for economic growth based upon industrial development does not proceed upon these uncertain lines. If the strategy is to be economic growth via industrial development, then one element of that strategy will have to be regularized water flow (Seastone, 1975:227, emphasis in the original).

Ensuring rapid industrial growth emerged as the primary objective for building a dam on the river from the government's point of view (Alberta Environment, 1975(c):2-3).

Other feasibility studies were then concerned with the 'minimization of impact' as the necessity of a dam was taken as given. "The final reports of the co-operating agencies and consultants were submitted to the Technical Advisory Committee. They provided the basis for the Main Report and (the) Summary Report. All reports were reviewed and approved by the three Committees and the Minister..." (Alberta Environment, 1975(b):2). The main report concluded that damsite 6 was the preferred location. Damsite 6 was recommended over damsite 7 because it had relatively less detrimental impact in terms of: (1) capital cost, (2) amount of land flooded by a reservoir, (3) fish and wildlife, (4) community life in the area, and (5) it would achieve water supply objectives (Alberta Environment, 1975(b):2-4).

Public Participation

An official policy of the government of Alberta is that there should be public input into all major environmental and resource decisions. In many places and at many times officials of the government, both elected and appointed, have stated that they are committed to a policy of 'open government' (see: Speeches, 1974:43, for instance). The government had not only made a commitment to public participation but this commitment also referred to specific mechanisms. Though there are potentially many means of involving the public, the government of Alberta deemed two, advisory groups and hearings, as the most appropriate (Speeches, 1974:176). The Red Deer River dam episode saw both of those techniques for participation utilized.

(1) The Public Advisory Committee:

The first technique involved was that of an advisory group. As indicated earlier, the D of E organized a public advisory committee (PAC) as part of the feasibility study structure (see Appendix B). PAC was formed to ensure public input into the Red Deer River Flow Regulation Proposal (a list of the PAC members also appears in Appendix B).

Members of the PAC represented two sectors of the river basin population: local government and special interest groups. "As far as could be ascertained, various organizations and special interest groups were asked to nominate representatives for (PAC)" (Gill and Murri, 1975:143). These individuals were supposed to

represent those who would be most directly affected by a dam built on the Red Deer River (Alberta Environment, 1975(b):1), although only one member resided in the immediate area of either proposed damsite.

On a general level, PAC was to provide public input to others in the study structure as the various research tasks proceeded. In more specific terms the "two basic anticipated functions (of PAC were): 1. to bring public concerns to the committee meetings so that they could be taken into account for the proposed studies, and 2. to take information from (PAC) for diffusion into the public" (Gill and Murri, 1975:143). More will be said about PAC in the analysis chapters.

(2) The Environment Conservation Authority:

The second mode of public participation preferred by the government is public hearings. There are at least two on-going agencies in Alberta who conduct public hearings regarding resource development and environmental protection - the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) and the Environment Council of Alberta (ECA). It was the ECA who were charged with the responsibility of holding public hearings into the Red Deer River Flow Regulation Proposal.

The ECA was created in 1970 by a Social Credit government though the Environmental Conservation Act. The ECA was charged with the responsibility of investigating matters pertaining to environmental conservation including: (1) conservation, management, and utilization of natural resources, (2) prevention and

control of pollution, (3) control of noise levels, and (4) social and economic factors related to 1, 2, and 3 above (see section 3 of the Environment Conservation Act).

The ECA was comprised of a four member permanent board appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council (see section 4 of the Act). A research and participation program staff were also hired on a permanent basis. An appointed Science Advisory Committee (SAC) was also included in the ECA organization. The SAC was comprised of industry and academic scientists who could not initiate research projects but who could put together existing research information when requested to do so by the ECA.

As originally conceived the ECA was seen as an 'ombudsman' type body (Hansard, 1972:71). The ECA was not a branch of any government department, but reported directly, with recommendations only, to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council (i.e. the cabinet). The ECA could call for public hearings on resource and environmental matters according to its own discretion and priorities. The relationship of the ECA to the rest of the government and the cabinet underwent several major changes during the period under study. These changes play a major role in analysis of the Red Deer experience but will not be discussed until later, for now it is necessary only to realize significant changes did occur.

(3) The Hearings:

At any rate, the ECA was requested by the Minister to hold public hearings regarding the Red Deer River Flow Regulation Proposal in June of 1975. The ECA was to receive submissions

and discussions dealing with " a comparative assessment of the proposed sites, and the rationale for and necessity of flow regulation " (ECA News Release, 18 July 1975). It was stressed that " only feasibility studies are being conducted at this time, (there) will be no decision to build a storage reservoir until after the public hearings and discussion in the Legislature " (ECA,1975(c):13; emphasis added).

Prior to the hearings the ECA attempted to provide information to the public with which to prepare submissions. A series of nine information bulletins were released to the general public. Bulletins 1, 2, and 3 provided background information and the terms of reference covering the hearings and impact studies. Bulletins 4 through 8 were a summary of the feasibility studies and those studies themselves. An assessment of the proposal by the ECA's Science Advisory Committee comprised the contents of bulletin #9. To aid public use of the information the ECA established a number of information centres in 13 locations in the river basin, in addition to their regular 52 outlets in the province. These information centres were opened approximately 10 weeks before the hearings were convened. The ECA also organized and held a series of information meetings before the hearings commenced.

The hearings took place between November 20 and December 2, 1975, at five locations in the basin - Sundre, Innisfail, Spruce View, Red Deer, and Drumheller. A typical hearings format was followed at each occasion. Oral submissions

from the public was preceded by a brief statement by a D of E official. Following each public brief, the ECA board questioned each participant. A general question period concluded each session.

In all 795 persons attended the hearings and a total of 185 submissions, both written and oral, were received (ECA, 1976(a):3). Those who attended and presented briefs included farmers of the area, basin townspeople, local high school students, local government officials, and other interested persons, as individuals and as representatives of private and public organizations. Briefs were typically well-prepared and touched on a variety of issues. Issues included the loss of farmland, negative and positive impacts of industrial development, damage to the natural environment, the dislocation of those living in the area of the proposed damsites, and alternatives to a dam and alternative damsites.

Opposition to the government proposal emerged before the hearings with, for example, the formation of the Raven River Valley Preservation Association. As the hearings proceeded, rejection of both sites 6 and 7 accelerated to a point where there was almost unanimous opposition (ECA,1976(a):10). A public opinion survey conducted after the hearings confirmed those views.

A general complaint of public participants was the inadequacy of the planning studies. Following are examples of complaints, a list intended to be illustrative rather than

exhaustive:

1. other potential sites and alternatives did not receive enough attention - especially damsite 11 further upstream;
2. lack of or inadequate consideration of the loss of production value in flooding valueable farmland - especially important given an apparently increasing world food problem;
3. industrial projections appear extremely uncertain and that uncertainty was not reflected in the planning studies - especially in the cost/benefit and water demand studies;
4. lack of attention to the desirability and negative impacts of rapid industrial development, in terms of rapid population growth and the life expectancy of hydro-carbon resources;
5. the apparently unnecessary speed with which the planning studies were carried out - especially those dealing with fish, wildlife, water quality, and river regime which require lengthy study periods to be in any way conclusive.

(from Proceedings, 1975: vols. 1-7)

In its report to the Minister the ECA's major recommendation was that further study, and probably further hearings, were necessary. More extensive study should be done concerning the advantages and disadvantages of site 11 (located upstream from sites 6/7, 17 miles from Sundre). Site 11 enjoyed much preliminary support as its reservoir would not flood any farmland. Further study of site 11 and alternatives to a dam altogether, would allow more comprehensive evaluations of the government-proposed sites. The ECA deferred its final recommendations until further detailed study had been completed (ECA, 1976(a):11-12). Though, the preliminary report agreed that "some measure of flow control ... be recognized and accepted

as wise, prudent and necessary " (ECA,1976(a):15).

The Minister apparently agreed with the ECA recommendations as he instructed the Planning Division of Alberta Environment to carry out further study of flow regulation in the Red Deer River. Assessment of potential upstream damsites and other alternatives were made in 1976 (see Alberta Environment, 1976 (a) and (c)). Of the potential damsites upstream it was concluded that two, site 11 and the Williams Creek site, were feasible on the basis of very preliminary engineering considerations (Alberta Environment,1976(a):10). No recommendations were made regarding comparison between these upstream sites and site 6, but it was determined by the Minister that further detailed study of the upstream sites was not warranted at the time (Alberta Environment,1976(a):9). It should be noted that study of the upstream sites and other alternatives was extremely speculative in nature, as these studies were not nearly as detailed as the site 6/7 studies.

Pre-hearing activity in 1977 was very similar to that of 1975. The ECA added four additional information bulletins to those released in 1975 (see Alberta Environment,1976(a), (b), and (c) and ECA,1976(b)). These bulletins were made available to the public at the same information centres used in 1975. Eleven information meetings were held in the basin by ECA staff and representatives of the D of E during January of 1977 (ECA,1977:21). Locations, dates, and time of the hearings was contained in Information Bulletin #1 and were also advertised

in the local media.

The second round of hearings took place during the period of March 1 to March 9, 1977. Hearings were held in 6 locations: Sundre, Spruce View, Innisfail, Drumheller, Red Deer, and Stettler. The hearing format was the same as that of the 1975 hearings.

In all 1188 people attended the 1977 hearings and 156 submissions were presented. Briefs represented basically the same sectors of the population as in the previous hearings, but " the only sector which apparently chose not to make submissions was industry, in spite of the fact that the major projected water demands were for industrial purposes " (ECA, 1977:31). Of the briefs presented, 43 were from groups and organizations and 113 were from individuals.

The issues raised were basically unchanged from the 1975 hearings. A large number of people expressed concerns about and the undesirability of large-scale industrial development in the river basin. Although there was general support for some kind of flow augmentation by about three to one. There was an extremely marked preference for a combination of regulation alternatives rather than a single damsite, though exactly what that combination would be remained somewhat unclear. Again, opposition to a dam at site 6 remained very strong. Many were resigned to the fact that a dam would be built, but that it should be at site 11 rather than at site 6. A public opinion survey following the hearings confirmed views

expressed during the hearings (above from ECA,1977:35-47 and Proceedings,1977:vols. 1-8).

Following the hearings the ECA made a number of recommendations to the Minister (ECA,1977:51-107). Of those recommendations two are especially important here: 1. that sites 6 and 7 no longer be considered as potential damsites, and 2. that further detailed study be undertaken of the sites upstream from Sundre, especially site 11. These recommendations were based on the strength of opinion received by the ECA. The principle that prime agricultural land should not be taken out of use permanently and the extreme uncertainty of projected industrial water demand carried much weight in the recommendations. Because of the nebulous industrial forecasts, the ECA felt there was no immediate need for a dam thus giving ample time for more study. Another interesting recommendation was that the government undertake comprehensive intergrated land and water use planning at the regional level. The report containing these, and other, suggestions was transmitted to the Minister on June 30,1977.

The Decision and Subsequent Events

On July 18, 1977 the Minister of the Environment announced that the government had decided to build a dam on the Red Deer River at site 6 (D of E Press Release 18 July 1977). This announcement was made on the very same day as the ECA

final report was released to the public (Edmonton Journal, 18 July 1977:1,3). The minister said, " flow regulation can be achieved more effectively by a dam at site 6 which will serve the best interests of long-term water management in the river " (Edmonton Journal, 18 July 1977:1). Site 6 was chosen apparently for the following reasons: the capital cost of site 11 was higher, site 11 would destroy a stretch of white water important to canoeing enthusiasts, and site 11 would flood an Indian burial ground. Construction of the dam was to begin immediately.

The decision to build at site 6 brought an enraged outcry from basin residents, as well as others. The following illustrates the hostility which emerged because of the government decision:

1. "ECA joins opposition to Red Deer dam at site 6" (Red Deer Advocate, 18 July 1977:5);
2. "ECA scientists/staff considering resignation over Red Deer River decision" (Red Deer Advocate, 18 July 1977:1);
3. "Residents furious at 'high-handed' Red Deer dam decision" (Calgary Herald, 19 July 1977:21);
4. Unifarm joins list of those opposed to dam decision; organize anti-dam rally (Sherwood Park News, 20 July 1977:15);
5. Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists publicly criticize Environment Minister (Edmonton Journal, 22 July 1977:27);
6. Christian Farmers Federation joins protest (Edmonton Journal, 26 July 1977:26);
7. Sierra Club joins protest (Edmonton Journal, 27 July 1977:5);
8. Opponents of site 6 dam hold mock funeral for farmland, human rights, and dignity; Russell and Loughheed burned in effigy (Red Deer Advocate, 8 August 1977:1);

9. Farmers march on legislature (Red Deer Advocate, 2 March 1978:1).

The latest development has brought the issue before the Supreme Court of Alberta. A permit was granted to a private engineering firm to begin survey operations at site 6. A local farmer, Gene Michiel, supported by a group of neighbors asked the court to award an injunction to forbid the survey crews access to his land. The injunction application was denied on the grounds that " no injunction can be awarded against the provincial government without the permission of the provincial government " (Edmonton Report, 3 November 1978:29). Mr. Michiel has stated that it is his intention to utilize other means in having the issue brought before the courts at another time.

Findings of the ECA hearings, the ECA opinion polls, and the above events suggest that the public participation programme concerning the Red Deer River dam was less than successful. Whether seen from the point of view of the government of Alberta or from a citizen standpoint the programme seems to have failed. It did not produce a plan acceptable to those most directly affected by the changes implied by the decision. The concerns of the area residents do not appear to have been taken into account. From the government's point of view, the length of time required for the exercise and the hostility engendered by it suggest that the Red Deer River experience could not be classified a success. It is the purpose of the analyses to follow to test propositions from the two analytical models, described in Chapter Two, in explaining what took place

in the Red Deer River basin between 1973 and 1977. Before beginning that analysis, the chapter immediately following will indicate the hypotheses to be tested and the methodologies through which those hypotheses will be tested.

Notes

1. These ratios are determined through a comparison of the ratio of regional employment in a basic industry to the ratio of national employment for the same basic industry.

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Chapter Four

Hypotheses and Methods

This chapter is comprised of two major components. First, hypotheses derived from the elitist and conflict models will be delineated. A description of the methodologies employed in testing those hypotheses constitutes the second component of this chapter. The methodology employed could be labeled as a case study, though this particular case study is comprised of several different methodological techniques. These techniques include historical and case documentation, and content analysis.

Immediately following is a delineation of the general hypotheses derived from the theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter Two. The hypotheses derived are intended to address the main question underlying this study: how can the events at Red Deer be best explained? Any emergent explanation must aim

at an understanding of the overwhelming opposition to the government plan which emerged before, during and after the public participation programme. Discussions of these matters will proceed in the following fashion: first, hypotheses will be stated; second, methods will be presented; and third, a statement of results expected by each model will conclude the chapter.

Hypotheses

The Elitist Model

The elitist model concentrates upon the personal characteristics of political actors. Emerging from assumptions regarding value consensus and societal stability are role performance imperatives. If society is to be stable and not in a constant chaotic condition all societal parts, subsystems through individuals, must perform their functions (roles) properly and adequately. Furthermore, since there is a basic consensus amongst society's members regarding overall values, goals and objectives, public decision-making remains an essentially technical matter. In both cases, adequate role performance is paramount - decision-making is best left in the hands of elites. According to the elitist model there are several identifiable personal qualities which public decision-makers must possess. If the above prescriptions are not followed 'socio-political instability' is the inevitable and destructive result.

The amount of opposition generated over the Red Deer River dam decision (see Chapter 3) is surely the 'socio-political instability' predicted by the elitist theory. It is opposition to the official plan which must be explained - i.e. opposition to the official plan can be seen as a dependent variable. The dependent variable is contained in the notion of 'over-politicization'.

Over-politicization is otherwise known as too much participation. Involving the general public at an inappropriately high level will bring about opposition, cleavage or what have you, and unnecessarily extend the decision-making process. Too much participation endangers decision-making stability because the general public lacks particular role prerequisites. In particular, the general public is apathetic, self-interested and incompetent rather than enthusiastic, community-minded and competent.

The claim regarding role capacity derives mainly from empirical generalizations determined by proponents of the elitist paradigm. As indicated in Chapter Two, the necessary role capabilities are found in those who engage in high levels of political activity (defined in terms of 'degree of difficulty' and amount of activity). Incidentally, those engaged in high levels of political activity generally have high SES. Attending public hearings and submitting briefs at a public hearing most certainly are considered as high level political activities, given the amount of time and energy which must be expended in preparation. The elitist model would

predict that those submitting briefs especially possess the proper personal qualities.

The fact that a tremendous amount of opposition (i.e. instability) emerged in the Red Deer River public participation apparently flies in the face of the above prediction. But the model also claims that too much participation will bring the 'wrong kinds of people' into the process. Thus, the opposition engendered indicates that the programme involved too many of the general public. That is, many (some) of the participants must have lacked the proper role requisites for public decision-making and therefore opposed the plan derived by the experts. Subsequently, the main general hypothesis derived from the elitist model is that those who opposed the officially-designated alternatives did so because they lacked interest, public-mindedness and competence.

Basic to the elitist notions of decision-making and planning is the assumption of value-consensus. Since basic objectives (values or desired end-states) are agreed upon, the problem is one of achieving those objectives. With agreement on objectives, only decisions about means are left and these are essentially technical in nature. Moreover, decisions about plans of action are, then, best left to the 'experts'. The technical nature of decision-making provides further rationale for maintaining low levels of public involvement. Consequently, a further general hypothesis contained in the elitist model is that there will be substantial agreement regarding the general objectives contained in the official

plan.

The two general hypotheses 'dove tail' in complementary fashion. Opposition to the official alternative results from certain technical incapacities of public participants. Participants generally agree on the objectives to be pursued, but oppose a plan which they do not understand or which adversely affects their own interests.

There are five specific hypotheses derived from elitist theory:

- (1) those who oppose the official plan are likely to be more self-interested than those who support the official plan; further, those directly-affected will oppose the official plan;
- (2) those who oppose the official plan are likely to be more incompetent than those who support the official plan;
- (3) those who oppose the official plan are likely to be more apathetic than those who support the official plan;
- (4) there will be basic agreement among opponents and supporters regarding overall objectives of the official plan; and,
- (5) those opposing the official plan are more likely to be of lower SES than those supporting the official plan.

The Conflict Approach

The conflict framework concentrates on structural rather than individual characteristics. Emphasis is placed on social relationships in which individuals must act rather than on the individuals themselves. Because individuals must act within existing and specific social relationships there are constraints upon individual action. Subsequently, understanding of human action is sought in examining constraining social relationships. In terms of the case at hand, the conflict perspective focuses on the process of public decision-making. The alternate focus of the conflict perspective gives rise to different theoretical claims and to different methods.

In this alternative focus of the conflict model emerge several theoretical claims different from the elitist model. Emphasis on development and qualitative growth brings the needs of individuals rather than societal stability into the limelight. If individuals are to grow according to their own potential then society must provide for their varying needs. Because individuals have varying, and often opposing, needs and potentials, conflict is inevitable. The satisfaction of needs and attendant conflict take place within the parameters of existing social relationships (structures). The essential or most important factor regarding the outcomes of a conflict situation is power (or its varying forms, such as influence and authority). For one to develop according to one's potential requires power or control over one's destiny.

Typically, economic interests or needs have dominated the outcomes of conflict situations, and do so within the confines of historical and existing social relationships. Planning or public decision-making is but one of the multitude of social relationships within which human beings must attempt to realize their needs. Economic objectives have typically dominated planning, rendering public participants espousing other objectives powerless. The lack of power on the part of public participants is the primary source of public hostility towards public decisions.

In very general terms, the conflict approach claims that conflict, or instability as the elitists put it, results from too little, rather than too much, public participation. Opposition emerges where some participants, or all public participants, see their needs and desires glossed over by a public decision process. Where public participants have little power over, or control of, the outcome of the decision process they will surely resist. A decision which is made for them not with them will very likely lead to the kinds of post-process actions witnessed at Red Deer. Subsequently, the main general hypothesis derived from conflict theory is that the hostility and opposition produced at Red Deer are the result of the lack of control the public had over the decision to which the public participation programme was addressed. This general claim implies three further specific and interrelated propositions.

First, it is hypothesized that the events of the Red

Deer River flow regulation episode were simply another case of a 'public relations programme'. The events at Red Deer are no more than another particular case in which a government agency was attempting to persuade a public to accept its view of the way things are and ought to be, rather than attempting to discover public needs and desires. As such, the public participation programme at Red Deer falls into the 'lower' levels of participation of tokenism and manipulation (c.f. Arnstein, 1969; Farrell et.al., n.d.). The major characteristic of tokenistic, manipulative, or co-optative public participation is a lack of authority by the public. This 'PR' hypothesis implies that the decision addressed was actually made ahead of the public participation.

The second hypothesis concerns the structure of the public participation. A lack of power is a structural concern, for social power can only be exercised and realized within social relationships - power is a relative and, therefore, structural concept (c.f. Bierstadt, 1950). Conflict theory predicts that the public's lack of power will be manifested and a result of the structure of the public participation programme. A structurally induced lack of power will produce hostile reactions on the part of the powerless. In a specific fashion the conflict perspective predicts that the public participation vehicle used will have no structural means of enforcing its part in the ultimate decision.

The final narrow hypothesis pertains to the objectives, or interests/values toward which the planning exercise is

aimed. Determination of what ends a decision process is focused is of utmost concern. In situations where desired end-states, and therefore interests, conflict, the choice of ends is but one further indication of power. As Jones (1969: 33) notes in his analysis of planned change: "the pattern of relationships in the goal setting process...closely parallels that of the influence pattern". Conflict theory predicts that economic objectives and interests will dominate the goal setting process. Where a number of conflicting interests are present in a single decision process, economic interests will be ascendant.

Methods

In this section the hypotheses specified above are operationalized through a description of the data collection technique utilized in this study. There were two methodological techniques used: case/historical methods and content analysis. Each method complemented the other and each assumed varying importance.

Content Analysis

Content analysis was employed in testing propositions for both models. Though content analysis was more important in gathering data specified by elitist theory than it was for conflict theory. It should be emphasized that content analysis

is not the most important methodological technique used. The overall method is that of a case study - an in-depth analysis of a specific and limited series of events aimed at making theoretical and practical implications. Content analysis is a powerful, if under-utilized, tool in social science, and will provide a great deal of information in performing theoretical and practical assessments. Also used are the basic techniques of case study (i.e. following the directions pointed to as the data unfolds), historical research (i.e. use of official and other documents) and personal interviews. It should not be assumed, nor is it implied, that content analysis is the most important method, even though description of the content analysis takes up a sizable portion of this chapter.

Initially, content analysis was chosen to test elitist hypotheses only. Typically, those working within this theoretical tradition used survey methods. Financial constraints rules out a survey in the first instance. More importantly, much of the data needed, especially to test the claims regarding role capability, already existed. Verbatim transcripts of submissions to both public hearings were available from the Environment Council of Alberta at no cost. As the research program proceeded it became evident that content analysis could also be used in testing conflict hypotheses as well.

Each theory discusses or analyzes 'attitudes' of public participants. Elitist theory focuses directly upon attitudes and personal characteristics whereas conflict theory

highlights 'attitudes' which are structurally induced. As a data collection technique, content analysis is especially suited to these concerns. One of the most beneficial uses of content analysis is in understanding the originators of a communication (Babbie, 1975:225). The elitist theory, for instance, is predicated on a particular understanding of the originators of communication, in this case, participants in a decision-making process. Content analysis has the additional benefit of being unobtrusive (c.f. Webb et.al., 1966; Phillips, 1971).

Decisions concerning units of analysis and observation lead to the most critical aspect of content analysis - specification of categories. The units of analysis were determined by the theoretical frameworks. Both theories in varying degrees focus upon individual political actors. Political actors can be single individuals, informal groups of individuals, or organized groups of individuals. Whatever the specific case, the main unit of analysis is the 'political actor'. In the case at hand, the actors are participants, be they individuals, groups or organizations.

Two further points regarding the unit of analysis emerge here. First, because there was not an unmanageable number of briefs, no sampling procedure was required (c.f. Babbie, 1975:228). Second, where a single actor presented more than one brief in one 'session' of hearings, that actor's submissions were 'aggregated'.¹ Aggregation of briefs by one actor was undertaken because the unit of analysis was the actor and not

the submission. Exactly how the aggregation took place is discussed later.

Consequently, the universe of analysis was all those actors presenting briefs in the 1975 public hearings and/or the 1977 public hearings into the Red Deer River flow regulation proposal. Observation of the actors was carried out in a content analysis of briefs presented to the hearings as recorded in the ECA publication of the proceedings of the hearings (1975) and the continued public hearings (1977). Included in this 'population' were scheduled briefs only, that is, only those who specifically requested to present a brief to the ECA panel were included. By using only scheduled briefs, those who presented oral briefs only (i.e. stood up at a hearing during the period set aside for unannounced opinions or questions) were excluded. These were excluded because they would unnecessarily bias results downward for both supporters and opponents of the official plan.

Specification of Categories - the dependent variable

This category is rather obvious. In most cases, an actor supported or opposed the alternative proposed by the government. A river flow impoundment structure (a dam) at either of what were known as site #6 or site #7 (Raven site) were taken to be the alternative proposed (the official plan). Each actor, by the content of their brief(s), was categorized as supporting or opposing sites 6 and/or 7. This category

provides the initial dichotomy of actors, the importance of which was defined in the section dealing with the derivation of hypotheses.

Specification of this category excluded several more briefs from analysis. In two cases, actors who presented more than one brief and who changed position in those briefs were excluded from further analysis. This exclusion was required because actors not briefs were taken as the unit of analysis.

Aggregation of briefs (see below) posed no difficulty with regard to the category at hand. Those whose position remained constant were simply classified into whatever that position was.

Specification of Categories - the independent variables

A. Elitist Theory

What follows indicates the independent variables specified by elitist theory. The analysis, as indicated by elitist theory, focuses on the 'personal' qualities of the political actor, in particular, whether or not that actor is competent, community minded and interested. In order to determine those traits, or lack of those traits, the unit of observation employed, as indicated above, was the submission. Each brief was analysed to determine the extent of the salient personal qualities. The intent was to classify actors in terms of those personal categories suggested by elitist theory through

observing their verbal behavior (i.e. in a brief). In general, the categories of interest can be defined as: (1) competence/incompetence of actors, (2) the level of self/community-interest, (3) apathy/interest among actors, (4) agreement/disagreement with government-defined objectives (values), and (5) SES of the various actors.

Most content analyses are simply frequency counts of categories specified rather than measures of each category on a continuum. This sacrifices measures of intensity (Pool cited in Burkhardt, 1975:109). In the content analysis carried out here, wherever possible categories were defined in a manner which aimed at capturing intensity. Again, it is the specification of categories which is crucial to the potential analytical power of content analysis as a methodological tool. The reader should also be aware that supplementary evidence will also form part of the 'test' of the propositions of elitist theory.

(1) Self-Interest/Public-Interest:

This category derives from discussions regarding 'public regardingness' or 'community-mindedness'. Definition of the category or, more precisely, gradations within the category, follows 'distance' from the actor - that is, the distance from the actor to the 'level' of interest to which the actor refers as a basis for arguments for or against sites 6/7. Where an actor referred to more than one level of interest, a brief was classified according to that level of interest which

predominated the arguments presented. There were seven 'levels' used:

- (i) self - where an actor referred to his/her interests only. For example, a farmer referring only to farmland of his/hers which is affected by the plan, or a local town council referring only to an increased tax base, or a Chamber of Commerce referring only to increased business opportunities for its members. These kinds of references were classified as self-interest.
- (ii) community - where an actor referred to an identifiable village, town or city of the Red Deer River basin. The only 'community' not identifiable in a geo-political sense which was referred to was the 'farming community'. Those who referred to a farming area were classified as referring to a community.
- (iii) area - where an actor referred to area of the Red Deer River basin. An area in the basin could be the mountain area of the West, a county in the basin, the lake area, etc.
- (iv) region - where an actor referred to the Red Deer River basin as a whole.
- (v) provincial - where an actor referred to the province of Alberta.
- (vi) national - where an actor referred to Canada.

(vii) international - where an actor referred to an interest larger than Canada. For example, reference to the world food situation or the world petro-chemical situation was taken to be international interest.

In conjunction with the second 'component' of the self-interest hypothesis a second category was coded here:

(i) directly affected/not directly affected - an actor involved in a direct and permanent affect was classified as directly affected. The definition used placed all those suggested by Gill and Murri (1975) in the directly affected category. Though it could be argued that small centres such as Spruce View would be directly affected by the proposed construction phase, the affect would be temporary. Thus, only those affected by an actual damsite itself were classified as such.

(2) Competence/Incompetence:

Four measures (categorizations) were used to determine the level of competence possessed by an actor. It must be recognized that competence is a complex concept. As such, four separate measures were used, as none was seen as complete-in-itself. The intent of categorization here is to attempt to evaluate the 'intensity' of an actor's competence regarding

the issues involved in the Red Deer River flow regulation proposal. The first two 'measures' are simple counts whereas the last two are either/or categories:

- (i) number of issues addressed - simple count of the number of issues addressed in a brief. The possibilities included economic impact, water quality, decentralization, industrial development, social impact, water supply, environmental impact, among others.
- (ii) length of brief - simple count of the number of pages of a brief. Counting the pages is justified in that the published proceedings were recorded in a similar typographical manner.
- (iii) counter/supplement government rationale - whether or not an actor presented a simple position or argued in defence of the position taken.
- (iv) articulation of alternative(s) - articulation of an alternative designed to address problem areas of the Red Deer River basin, as opposed to a position which does not imply/articulate some course of action.

The rationale behind each of the measures is simply that each contributes to determining the extent of an actor's competence. It could be argued that if an actor (1) addresses

more issues, (2) presents a lengthy brief, (3) argues for a position, and (4) proposes a course of action, that actor could be deemed more competent than those who do not. The general hypothesis derived from elitist theory is that those supporting the official plan will 'score higher' on each of these measures. More will be said in this regard below.

Aggregation of briefs was most critical with regard to the competence category. In aggregating briefs the number of issues and length of presentation were based upon the initial submission. Subsequent briefs were added to these two measures only if additional issues were addressed. When additional issues were raised, the length of the presentation taken up by additional concerns was added to the initial length. In considering argument and alternatives, each actor was given the 'benefit of the doubt', as it were. If any one of an actor's briefs could have been deemed as arguing a position and/or suggesting courses of action, the actor was classified in that manner.

Competence, in the sense of political efficacy, was excluded from the content analysis for several reasons. The first reason pertains to a theoretical inconsistency with the elitist model itself. It appears that claims regarding technical competence are much more plausible in that public decisions do in fact often involve very complex issues. Furthermore, it would seem that technical competence would be required to deal with those issues. In addition, the essentially technical nature of planning would point to the imperative

of technical competence. As such, it would seem that self-confidence is an antecedent rather than precedent condition to adequate decision-making. As in any other activity, confidence in one's ability comes from engaging in those activities.

Secondly, the pre-test found political efficacy almost impossible to code. None of the briefs used in the pre-test could be coded as indicating political self-confidence, or a lack of it, in the presenter. One participant, although, noted that no one would be taking part in the hearings if they did not think they (the hearings) would be useful in forming the final decision. For this and the reason noted above, political efficacy was excluded from the empirical tests conducted in this thesis.

(3) Apathy:

The general hypothesis here is that those in opposition are more apathetic. Two measures of determining apathy were utilized:

- (i) read reports - each actor was classified, by content of submission, as to whether the reports supposedly distributed to the public had been read or not.
- (ii) reappearance at 1977 hearings - those actors who made submissions at both the 1975 and 1977 hearings.

(4) Values/Objectives:

Each actor was categorized as to whether there was agreement or disagreement with the stated overall objectives of the government in proposing a dam be built on the Red Deer River. The overall goal of the government of Alberta was decentralization of population and industry through management of water resources, among other factors. Again, most actors explicitly stated a preference regarding the overall objective, although a significant minority presented their position in less explicit manners.

(5) Socioeconomic Status:

The standard SES or elitist model claims that SES is directly related to political participation. Content analysis in this case could not gather socioeconomic data directly. Information regarding SES was gathered through the use of a 'proxy' variable. Where possible the residence of each actor was coded. Actors were classified as residing in (1) rural/village, (2) town, or (3) city. The elitist model, as an offshoot of its SES claim, does, in fact, actually predict that urban dwellers are more politically active than those residing in rural locations (Milbraith, 1965:128).

Census of Canada and Alberta Bureau of Statistics define urban centres as settlements with a population of over 1,000 people (cited in RDRPC, 1972:9). This census

definition does not appear to capture the essentially rural nature of small communities in largely agricultural districts. Three categories, as mentioned above, rather than two were used. Residential classification followed that used by the Department of Environment Red Deer River flow regulation studies (see: Gill and Murri, 1975), which employed four categories: cities, towns, villages, and residual (rural). The distinctions used appear to be based upon political lines. That is, settlements designated as 'town', for example, in a municipal charter are classified as 'town' and so on.

B. Conflict Theory

There were three 'personal' categories indicated by the hypotheses derived from conflict theory. They included coding of briefs in terms of agreement with government objectives, interest represented, and recognition of power position.

(1) Objectives:

A category labeled 'conditional' agreement with overall objectives was added to the other categories specified (see page 138 above). Conflict theory predicts that there will not necessarily be agreement about goals and that there may be some agreement on vague principles, but this agreement often breaks down when goals are concretized. An actor was categorized as agreeing with goals conditionally if agreement

with rapid economic decentralization and industrial development was present where that actor felt the goal was worthy if it meant small industry, non-polluting industry, or industry based on agricultural pursuit, and so on.

(2) Interest Represented:

Five categories of interest were specified, the definitions of which emerged both from theoretical discussions of the conflict approach and from preliminary investigations of those interests which had obvious concern in the Red Deer decision. Those five categories were as follows:

- (i) economic/industrial - this category included those actors who represented an organization (enterprise) engaged in profit-earning activity, industrial and commercial activities generally.
- (ii) government - actors representing municipal, regional, county, provincial, or national governments.
- (iii) environmental - actors representing formal or informal organizations, or single individuals whose main concern regards the impact of the proposal upon fish, wildlife, river, flora, fauna, etc. of the Red Deer River basin.
- (iv) agricultural - any actor engaged in or representative of agricultural pursuits. Most obvious are farmers of the area. Organizations such as

Unifarm would be excluded as they are profit-making organizations, but an organization such as the National Farmers Union would not.

- (v) other (non-economic) - residual category, actors not representing any interest defined above, such as religious, community, or educational interests.

(3) Power:

This category would be more appropriately labeled 'powerlessness'. It could be argued that, in many cases, those who are in fact powerless will feel powerless. Two sub-categories comprise the power category:

- (i) trust in government - an actor who felt that the government would not in fact take account of all interests in making a decision. Almond and Verba (1963:206), among others, have shown that those who are able to influence public decisions do, indeed, have faith and trust in existing political arrangements.
- (ii) adequate information - an actor who felt that the information distributed to the public for making an informed decision was in some way inadequate or was not readily available. The importance of information has been emphasized by many and has led Audain (1972:84) to claim

that information is power.

Reliability

Reliability is "that quality of a measurement method that suggests that the same data would have been collected each time in repeated observations of the same phenomena" (Babbie, 1975:499). Ideally, two or more independent judges analyzing each brief would produce the most reliable results (c.f. Jones, 1971:10-12). Financial constraints, again, have ruled out independent judging as a means of testing categorization reliability. An acceptable alternative is to repeat the coding process on a sample of the 'population' after a suitable interval of time (Angill et.al. cited in Burkhardt, 1975:123). After a month's time 10% of the briefs (25 of 258) were recoded. The cases for recoding were chosen through the use of a random numbers table, without replacement.

Three measures of reliability were used.² The first measure utilized was simply the percentage of observed agreement in coding. This measure simply compares the number of categories coded to those coded similarly during each coding session. There was 93% agreement between codings.

A second coefficient of reliability which enjoys fairly extensive use is that developed by Bennet and his associates (1954). This reliability calculation controls for the possible bias due to the number of categories used, which simple percentage of agreement does not. Given that there was

93% observed agreement, Bennet's coefficient of reliability is .924.

The third measure of reliability was developed by Scott (1955). Scott's index of reliability takes account of the bias due to the frequency with which categories are used in analysis. By chance only, as the number of categories used in analysis decreases, there should be an increase in agreement. Scott's index of reliability calculates the ratio of the actual difference between coders' agreement and disagreement due to chance compared to the maximum calculatable difference between observed and random agreement.

In the case at hand, Scott's index of reliability was calculated as .921. Subsequently, it can be argued that coder reliability, and therefore 'measure reliability', is relatively high. More detailed explanation of calculation of reliability coefficients can be found in Appendix A.

Validity

The validity of the measures obtains, initially, in their theoretical derivation from the one-to-one basis of measures and theoretical concepts (Blalock, 1972:13). To further assess the extent to which the measures do measure what they were intended to, a 'pre-test' of sorts was carried out. This pre-test simply amounted to coding several briefs and then making a judgement as to the ease of categorization. Pre-testing led to the deletion of some categories and to the

modification in definition of others.

A second test of measure validity was also carried out. The test used corresponds to Babbie's (1975:340-345) suggestions for testing the validity of index construction. Where several measures of a single concept are used, one would expect each actor to score similarly on each measure. Such a test was carried out for the competence and apathy measures in elitist theory, and the power measures in conflict theory.

All the various measures of competence, apathy, and power were significantly correlated with one another. Levels of significance ranged from .000 to .0129, while strength of association, as measured by phi, ranged from .16563 to .77872. As such, it appears that the measures used are able to distinguish between various gradations within indicators and concepts. Presentation of correlations can be found in Appendix A.

Case/Historical Materials

Gathering and sifting through a rather large volume of case material comprised the main method in assessing conflict theory. Although, there was a substantial amount of material used in evaluating elitist theory, the case data was intended to 'complement' or strengthen conclusions regarding elitist theory, emergent through content analysis; whereas the situation was reversed for testing conflict hypotheses.

Most past research concerning public participation more or less falls into the category of case study - participant

observation type. Ideally, in using a case study method, the research should be carried out in the tradition of participant observation. Unfortunately, this case study had to be constructed in an after-the-fact manner. As such, there are two methodological techniques being employed, both of which require discussion: case and historical methods.

Some of the limitations of case study were discussed in Chapter 1, the main limitation being that regarding generalization. It should be noted that case study is typically limited only by an inability to make generalizations over space. This 'space-generalization' incapacity must be seen in light of the 'time-generalization' limitation of other more traditional sociological methods. Surveys, for instance, can take a 'snapshot' over the space of a particular society and thus generalize over the whole of a society. To make generalizations over longer periods of time through use of such methods requires increasingly unmanageable research programmes. A case study research programme designed to make generalizations over space would be hampered by a similar unmanageability. As societies and human beings exist in both time and space it is at least unclear as to which 'kind' of generalization is most important. Thus, the generalization criticism of case study loses much of its bite.

A further problem in doing case study is the paucity of literature regarding case study methods (see: Whyte, 1943: appendix; and Stinson, 1975: appendix, for example); in each case study the author must 'go it alone', as it were. Engaging

in a case study the researcher must follow the evidence in directions indicated in the actual collection of the data itself. A case study must search for recurrent themes in various contexts (Diesing, 1971:145). In doing so, the aim is to 'test' a theme against other evidence. This objective then requires the use of several data sources. In the present study, the actual sources used were: (1) legislation, (2) government publications, (3) legislative debates, (4) newspaper articles, (5) personal interviews, and (6) data collected in other studies. Validity and reliability of data collection techniques obtain through the use of several sources of information, much in the same way as in other methodologies. Survey methods, content analysis, and so on find validity in use of several measures, of a single concept, which are significantly correlated. In a similar manner, case methods obtain contextual validity or dependability through multiple information sources (c.f. Diesing, 1971:149) - if a particular 'theme' is confirmed by more than one source of evidence one could argue that the method of empirically affirming that theme is valid. Similarly, reliability can be assured through use of several data sources and by a "vigilant, skeptical, and well-informed researcher" (Pitt, 1975:321).

One of the main problems in holistic case research is defining boundaries around the subject matter (Diesing, 1971:277). In developing a multi-faceted picture of a particular subject area a researcher can be led in many directions. The present study was bound by the issues involved in the Red Deer

River dam decision. Evidence which bore directly upon the issues involved was considered. Case boundaries were additionally defined by the hypotheses derived from the conflict theory. That is, evidence which related to the power relationships involved in the Red Deer River drama was considered.

Among the data gathered there was a fairly large amount of an historical nature. Use of historical methods and data have generated some considerable debate in the social sciences (see Dray, 1966 and Bulmer, 1977). Despite claims to the contrary, historical methods have the same purposes as more traditional research techniques - they attempt to discern recurrent patterns in human behavior (c.f. Diesing, 1971:155-71). Both types of methodology intensely study particular 'social milieux' and attempt to relate specific milieux to 'larger' social patterns (cf. Goldthorpe, 1977: 183-86).

There are two final, but not unimportant, issues regarding case-historical methods which must be addressed. First, it could be argued that case-historical methods present the danger of selecting only favorable evidence. Second, and related, is a complaint of an inability to specify when relationships hypothesized are accepted or rejected.

The selection of data is an inherent aspect of using a theoretical framework as a guide to research. A theoretical model defines what kinds of data must be gathered and, in doing so, also defines what kinds of data which are not to be utilized. The two models used in this study are examples of the data

selectivity inherent in the use of analytical models. The point here is that data selectivity is related to use of theoretical models rather than being a necessary component of a particular method.

With regard to the second issue, admittedly using case-historical methods precludes the use of specific numerical significance levels, for example. Inability to specify significance levels regarding particular relationships does not, though, exclude making statements which assess the empirical validity of hypothesized social relationships. A theoretical framework defines types of data required for empirical support. Case-historical methods, like other methods, then gather data of the sort indicated. The data are then used to assess the utility of theoretical claims as explanation. Case-historical methods do not provide precise quantitative specification in assessing theory, but nonetheless evaluation can be made.

As mentioned earlier, a case study should be designed to discover a recurrent theme, or themes, through corroborative sources of evidence. The themes to be discovered are defined by the theoretical models. Conflict theory points to power relationships, decision-timing, the goal-setting pattern, and so on - the 'public relations' nature of the particular public participation experience. Whereas it is particular personal characteristics of public participants which constitute the theme of elitist theory. What follows is a description of the data sources utilized and accompanying rationale where necessary.

(1) Legislation

An examination of legislation bearing upon the Red Deer River case appears as an obvious first step. Legislation creating and defining roles and jurisdiction of the two main government actors, the Environment Conservation Authority and the Department of the Environment, was undertaken. Power relationships between the two and with the cabinet were of particular interest. The role public participation was required to play in environmental decision-making was also examined. This was the first step in defining the level of power held by the public.

As the research progressed it became apparent that another government body played a role in the Red Deer River decision, even if that was a 'silent' role. The Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) provided information and influenced the dam decision through its own related decisions regarding the petrochemical industry in Alberta. Given this 'influential', as opposed to direct, role it was deemed necessary to examine, present, and interpret legislation regarding the ERCB.

(2) Legislative debates

Accounts of legislative debates, recorded in Hansard, were also examined. Incorporating information from this source, again, appeared as an obvious step. Government views were necessary in piecing together the official Alberta doctrine

towards public participation. Such information did aid in defining the roles of the public, the ECA and the cabinet in the decision process.

Government debates also provided information regarding the specific dam decision. The amount of impact that the public had on the decision made was assessed in determining the government rationale for its decision.

The decision to build a dam on the Red Deer River brought about a debate in the Alberta Legislature. Elected representatives fall into one of the 'expert' categories defined by elitist theory. As 'guardians of the public interest', and as experts, it is expected that the politicians would have more competence, a better understanding of the issues involved in the Red Deer River dam decision. Therefore, a comparison of the quality of the debate in the legislature and the quality of briefs presented at the hearings should demonstrate a comparative analysis of the competence of the decision-makers. This expectation should also hold in a comparison of the testimony of technical experts and their answers to citizen questions.

As part of the research, an examination of the legislature debate was undertaken. The debate was recorded verbatim in Alberta Hansard. As part of the findings, contained in the following chapter, a comparison of the legislature debate and citizen input is presented. Admittedly, such a presentation was somewhat impressionistic but did provide some information valid in assessing the utility of elitist theory. A similar

account of the proceedings of hearings question periods was also undertaken. The research program here covered the period March 2, 1972 to November 3, 1978 - the 17th and 18th Legislatures of Alberta, all sessions.

(3) Government Publications

Various government publications provided, by far, the greatest amount of data in constructing the case study. The most important set of government publications utilized were the proceedings of the ECA hearings - fifteen volumes in all with some 2,750 pages of transcript. Next in importance was the D of E Planning studies - fifteen studies of approximately 2,000 pages. Also included were annual reports of the ECA, ERCB, and D of E, and D of E press releases for the period 1971-1978.

(4) Newspapers

A fairly extensive review of newspaper articles in the period 1972-1979 was carried out. Incidentally, and in anticipation, newspaper articles could be used as data for content analysis in further research about participation. The Red Deer Advocate and the Edmonton Journal were examined most closely, but other newspapers, including the Innisfail Province, the Calgary Herald and the Lethbridge Herald were also scrutinized.

Coverage of newspaper articles was aimed mainly at discovering evidence of a corroboratory nature. Newspaper articles were extremely beneficial in assembling the 'story' of the Red Deer River dam. Feelings of participants regarding their role in the decision were also found in several newspaper articles, editorials, and letters to the editor. Comments by government officials and others provided information concerning any 'objective conflict' which may have been operative.

(5) Secondary Data

Secondary data sources used were research done by other scholars and government agencies. Government-sponsored research utilized has been mentioned earlier, specifically the ECA and RDRPC surveys. Both sources were valuable in assessing the extent of agreement with overall government objectives, and in determining certain demographic characteristics of the region deemed important.

The other secondary sources included work done by other academics. Especially beneficial were studies done by Larry Pratt (1976, 1977), a University of Alberta political scientist. Pratt's studies provided important historical data regarding the oil industry in Alberta. Among other work, that done by Rickwood and Tillack (n.d.) deserves mention at this point.

Surveys undertaken by others comprised a major component of supplementary data in assessing the elitist theory.

The Red Deer Regional Planning Commission and the ECA both carried out surveys in the basin which did provide information regarding apathy and objectives.³ In both surveys, questions were asked regarding the government's objectives of decentralization and industrial development. An ECA survey in 1977 asked questions concerning knowledge of and participation in the hearings. Selected results of these surveys were used as further evidence in appraising the elitist propositions.

(6) Personal Interviews

Last, but not least, personal interviews were conducted with individuals who were part of the dam episode. These interviews were unstructured and informal with only 'areas of interest' rather than specific items guiding the questioning. The interviews were quite informative but unfortunately, due to time constraints, only a few interviews were actually undertaken. Although there was not a substantial amount of interview data, the information collected was valuable at many points.

Expected Results

To gain an empirical foundation, the hypotheses of an analytical model must hold up under the weight of empirical evidence. In terms of the content analysis one would expect to find significant relationships between variables in the manner predicted by each model. If the relationships found are

not significant but in the 'direction' predicted, it would appear that theoretical or operational modification would be necessary. If the relationships are in opposite directions to that predicted, significant or not, one would then have to begin to question the theory itself.

Assessment of case/historical material is somewhat more 'subjective' but nonetheless legitimate. If the evidence gathered through several sources does not support the themes defined, it would place a model in a suspicious light. Similar to content analysis, if evidence is contradictory or doubtful, it would seem some theoretical and/or methodological modifications are necessary. Comparative assessment of the two models depends upon the separate evaluation first undertaken.

The specific predictions made by each model appear in the analysis chapters. For now, suffice it to say that elitist theory expects to find that individual public participants who 'score significantly lower' on operational measures will be in opposition to the official plan. If that is the case over the range of elitist concepts it could be concluded that opposition at Red Deer occurred because of 'too much' public participation.

On the other hand, there are two predictions of conflict theory. First, conflict theory, in part, emerged as a result of perceived failures of the dominant, elitist paradigm (see Chapter Two). Subsequently, part of an assessment of the conflict theory rests on its predicted failure of the elitist theory to support its claims empirically. Secondly,

conflict theory would predict that evidence will provide a solid empirical foundation for its structural and power claims. Taken in concert these two predictions will have theoretical and practical implications very different from elitist theory.

Summary

Information collected from the various sources described is presented in the following chapter. Analysis of the data - both statistical and case-historical - is employed in assessing the relative utility of the two theoretical frameworks. Although there were limitations and constraints placed on the data collection methods, the evidence amassed provided a solid empirical based for evaluation.

Notes

1. There were two 'sessions' of public hearings, one in 1975 and another in 1977. Thus, if a single actor presented two or more briefs in the 1975 hearings, for example, those briefs were 'aggregated' into one.
2. These measures of reliability were intended for use in a situation where independent judges are used but are similarly useful in the situation at hand.
3. The RDRPC survey was carried out in 1974. The survey was a questionnaire mailed to 30,000 households in the region. Of the questionnaires mailed, 3,400 were returned and the results published by the RDRPC (1976).

Immediately following both sets of hearings the ECA commissioned public opinion polls. Each was a telephone interview conducted on a proportion-to-size stratified random sample of region residents. Both samples were over 500 (ECA, 1977:7).

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Chapter 5

Analysis - Elitist Theory

In this chapter, the research findings regarding propositions set out by elitist theory are reported and analyzed. Each hypothesis is examined separately. In each case more than one data collection technique and data source was utilized, with the various sources building upon each other. This chapter concludes with an overall evaluation of the ability of elitist theory to explain the events related to the Red Deer River dam decision. Implications of the elitist research are discussed in the final chapter.

Elitist Propositions

Briefly, elitist theory predicts that failure of a public participation programme is due to the personal characteristics of the ordinary citizens who participate. For the purposes of this research failure of the public participation programme has been operationally defined as opposition to the official government of Alberta proposal - building a flow regulation structure and reservoir at either of damsites #6 or #7 on the Red Deer River. In the main, elitist theory predicts that those opposing the official plan will possess lower 'quantities' of various personal and requisite social and political characteristics. The following discussions are arranged according to each 'hypothesis category'; with the specific hypothesis stated, the evidence presented and interpretations made.

Before proceeding it may be helpful to present the elitist hypotheses which were derived and tested. Five general hypotheses were derived from the elitist model and were presented in Chapter Four. These five general hypotheses were operationalized as twelve specific hypotheses. In most cases, each general category implied general and specific theoretical statements which were tested; they are as follows:

1. self-interest:

- public participants generally possess a 'private-regarding' ethos;
- specifically, plan supporters are more likely to possess a 'public-regarding' ethos than are opponents;

- those directly affected are more likely to oppose the official plan.
- 2. competence:
 - public participants are generally incompetent;
 - plan supporters are more likely to display more competence than plan opponents;
 - political experts will display more competence than public participants.
- 3. apathy:
 - few ordinary citizens will join the public participation process;
 - plan supporters will be involved to a greater degree;
 - only those directly affected are likely to participate.
- 4. values:
 - all participants will agree upon the overall plan objectives.
- 5. SES:
 - urbanites are more likely to be public participants;
 - supporters are more likely to reside in urban areas.

(1) Self-interest.

To reiterate, elitist theory claims that political instability emerges, in part, from the lack of a community perspective on the part of the general public. This general tenet would specifically predict that those participants, in the Red Deer hearings, who opposed the expert plan would more likely possess a self-, rather than community-interested perspective. Content analysis of the hearings proceedings provided the basic means of testing this proposition.

Through content analysis each brief was categorized in terms of reference to self through international outlook.

In making an argument for or against the proposed action, hearings participants would refer to (dis)advantages which may have personal, family, community through international repercussions. If an actor, for instance, complained that the dam would flood his/her land and that was the basis of his/her opinion, it was inferred that (s)he had a self-interested perspective. On the other hand, if an actor praised the plan in that it would bring needed employment opportunities to, say, one of the towns of the river basin, it could be inferred that this actor had a community-interested ethos; and so on.

In terms of absolute frequency (see table 5-1), all participants referred to the Red Deer River basin (region) most often (37.4%). Typically, arguments referred to regional employment opportunities, destruction of the region's natural environmental beauty, break-up of the regional agricultural industry, and so on. This was closely followed by reference to community effects (25.5%), such as increased pressure on municipal services, increased crime due to population increase, change in community character which would follow a dam and major industrialization. Reference to self-interest and area-interest was almost identical at 13.6% and 14% respectively. Those coded as self- or area-interested most often referred to property being flooded, or personal business gain from the proposed dam; or, reference was made to 'destruction of the farming community' and 'way of life'. Provincial and international interests were mentioned relatively few times. Strangely enough no one referred to a

national perspective in an argument for or against the government plan.

Analysis of the interest-level categories was carried out in two stages. In the first phase, those supporting the official government proposal were compared to those in opposition using all six categories of "interest-perspective". A second phase of analysis consisted of collapsing the categories to only two - narrow and broad. With these two 'created' categories the support/opposition comparison was made again. Tables 5-1 and 5-2 show the findings. It was expected, in both cases, that those supporting the plan would show a significant relationship to the 'broad' interest-levels.

Table 5-1 shows that those supporting the plan tended to refer to interests levels at the 'lower' end of the continuum. Almost 74% of supporters referred to either themselves or their community. To further test the self-interest hypothesis, narrow and broad interest-level categories were created. Reference to self was re-classified as a narrow interest-level, while the remaining categories were re-classified as indicating a broad outlook. Table 5-2 reports the findings with interest-level recoded.

As shown in table 5-2 there is a significant relationship between support or opposition to the plan and 'interest-perspective', but in a direction opposite to that predicted by elitist theory. Those who opposed the plan appear to be more likely to display a public-regarding ethic' in their presentations

Table 5-2
Narrow and broad interest-level by
position regarding the official plan

		Interest-level	
		narrow	broad
Position	support	7 30.4%	16 69.6%
	oppose	26 12.1%	188 87.9%
		Chi-square = 4.36838 significance = .0366 phi = .15635	

to the ECA. Whereas those supporting the plan were more likely to refer to themselves in arguing before the ECA board. Although the relationship is significant to at least the .0366 level¹ it is not particularly strong (phi = .15635). It is also worth noting that most public participants, regardless of position, apparently possessed a public-regarding ethos.

In examining the hearings proceedings it became obvious who supported the plan. Most supporters were local businessmen, local business organizations, and local governments. The most oft repeated argument was that a dam would bring industrialization which, in turn, would bring increased business opportunities. Most of those supporting the plan felt that increased business justified building a dam on the river.

The results found here do contradict elitist theory predictions. The weight of empirical refutation of the specific 'self-interest hypothesis' is somewhat lightened due to 1) the

small number of supporters, and 2) the fact that comparatively few participants, supporters and opponents, appeared to possess a 'private-regarding ethos'. Despite these qualifications, elitist propositions here are highly suspect on two counts. In the first case, it appears that few 'ordinary citizens' are self-interested, as almost 86% of all public participants referred to broad interests in their submissions. Thus, the general elitist contention that ordinary citizens are self-interested appears to have little empirical support, at least in this case. Most appear to take account of interests other than their own in forming their opinions.

In the second case, the specific elitist hypothesis is equally suspect. The opposition and hostility generated at Red Deer does not appear explainable in terms of the self-interest of opponents. In fact, the opposite seems true: it appears that opponents were more often in possession of a public or community perspective, as seen in the content analysis of hearings briefs. Opponents of the plan were more likely to include others in the formulation of their opinion than were supporters, as indicated by the measure used here.

The second elitist hypothesis here is concerned with the reactions of those directly affected by the official plan. Elitist theory predicts that those directly affected by the official plan, especially in an adverse manner, would be more likely to also be opponents to that plan. The null hypothesis is that there is no difference between supporters and opponents

in terms of the immediacy of the affects.

As table 5-3 shows the null hypothesis is rejected. The difference between the number of supporters who were directly affected (0%) and the number of opponents who were directly affected (24.6%) is significant. Persons or organizations who stood to lose land to flooding, for instance, tended to be in opposition to the plan. This finding must be qualified by the appearance of an empty cell, a significance level of .0256, and a low measure of association ($\phi = .1748$). The elitist claim regarding direct affects, thus, obtains some empirical support.

Table 5-3
Percentage of supporters and opponents
directly affected by the official plan

		Affect	
		direct	not direct
Position	support	0 0%	20 100%
	oppose	46 24.6%	141 75.4%
		Chi-square = 4.98227 significance = .0256 $\phi = .1748$	

Empirical support for the second of the apathy hypotheses is eroded by two other factors. First, in contradiction to elitist predictions it was not just those who were directly affected who participated. In fact, as a percentage of all participants those directly affected were very much in the minority (22.2%).

Second, and more important, if the hypothesis is re-interpreted empirical support is seriously undercut. By claiming that those directly affected will tend to react negatively, elitist theory implies that those not directly affected will, at best split evenly as supporters and opponents. Such is not the case, as fully 87.6% (141 of 161) of those not directly affected still opposed the plan. This suggests that opposition was not simply a consequence of adverse, direct affect.

In all only one of the self-interest hypotheses found any empirical support. Those people who were directly affected by the government dam proposal were very much in opposition to that plan. But it does not appear that the public participants generally were self-interested to the detriment of the participation process. Nor was opposition merely a result of adverse affect for a large number of opponents would not suffer from the official proposal directly. It would appear, then, that some other variable must be used to explain the opposition to the Red Deer River plan. Another factor identified by elitist theory is discussed immediately below.

(2) Competence.

Testing the general proposition regarding (in)competence utilized four measures of competence and involved three phases of testing. The four measures, described in Chapter Four, are 1. the number of issues addressed, 2. the length of present-

ation, 3. the use of argument, and 4. the articulation of an action option. A t-test, a chi-square test, and a 'comparison' of participant competence with politician competence comprise the three stages of investigation.

A t-test could be undertaken only using the 'number of issues' and 'length of presentation' measures. Of the four measures of competence, only the 'issues' and 'length' indicators were of the interval variety. Elitist theory, then, predicts that those supporting the plan would score significantly higher on these measures in terms of the mean number of issues addressed and the mean length of presentation. Subsequently, the null hypothesis is that the means for the two groups will not differ significantly.

Table 5-4

Mean number of issues in and length of brief
by position regarding the official plan.

		Competence		
		issues	length	2-tail probability
Position	support	3.52	4.91	-4.02 .00
	oppose	5.27	5.08	-0.14 .893

The null hypothesis, using the issues indicator, is rejected on the basis of the t-test. According to the above opponents discussed significantly more, not less, issues than supporters, with means of 5.27 and 3.52 respectively. The difference in means is significant to the .001 level with 31.98 degrees of freedom. The two-tail probability indicates that the

means are different to the extent that the probability of not predicting support or opposition given knowledge of the number of issues discussed is negligible.

The null hypothesis using the length measure is accepted on the basis of the t-test. Mean length of presentation does not differ significantly (4.91 versus 5.08) between supporters and opponents. Knowledge of the length of presentation does not aid in predicting support or opposition to the official plan, contrary to the claims of elitist theory.

Crosstabulating position regarding the official plan with each measure of competence constituted the second phase of testing in this area. Before a chi-square and phi were calculated the 'issues' and 'length' indicators were transformed, or collapsed, into dichotomous categories: few or many issues and long or short presentation². In each case below the null hypothesis was that those supporting the plan would not differ significantly from those opposing the plan along the several dimensions measured. Table 5-5 presents the findings.

The null hypothesis is accepted using the 'length' and 'argument' measures and rejected using the 'alternative' and 'issues' measures. With regard to the 'length' and 'argument' indicators, the acceptance of the null hypothesis means that supporters were no more likely to present long briefs and to use an argument, as opposed to a simple statement of position than were opponents. Whereas, the opponents appear more likely to address more issues which is a relationship opposite to that

predicted by elitist theory (the relationship is also significant to at least the .003 level). Only the 'alternative' measure shows a relationship which is significant and in the direction predicted by elitist theory. In all cases the strength of the relationships was relatively weak as is indicated by the phi measure of association. The findings here, with regard to the 'issues' and 'length' measures, are similar to those of the t-test.

These findings tell us that those supporting the official plan were no more likely to make long submissions or use argument than were those opposing the plan. Those supporting the government plan were, though, more likely to discuss fewer issues than opponents. Taken in concert it appears that supporters are no more competent than opponents, as indicated by the measures used here.

The one disparate finding concerns the 'alternatives' measure. It appears that supporters were more likely to suggest/ articulate an action alternative which contradicts the other results. The apparent contradiction loses some of its bite when another factor is considered. Supporters had to do little in the way of articulating an action option than to reiterate the government's proposal. Such being the case, it appears that it would have been more likely that supporters would have been coded as suggesting or articulating an action option.

Subsequently, the elitist hypothesis regarding the competence of the public participants has little empirical

support. As measured through content analysis opponents were as competent as supporters, although the strength of the relationship varied depending upon the indicator used. In simple language, opponents of the official plan formulated their opinions through an apparent understanding of the issues involved and their implications. Opposition was not simply the result of ignorance of the issues nor of an inability to grasp the complexity of the government proposal. Although there are some highly technical aspects of a river facility such as a dam, ordinary people can still attain a grasp of the issues in the decision to be made. Thus, the specific 'supporter versus opponent' hypothesis must be rejected.

In addition a perusal of table 5-5 shows that all participants, regardless of position, tended to score in the "positive" categories of competence measures. Most participants appeared to have presented well thought out submissions which displayed an understanding of the complexity of the decision to be made. That most participants, supporters and opponents, generally displayed competence flies in the face of elitist theory. Ordinary citizens are not incompetent as elitist theory claims. As with the self-interest hypothesis, neither the general nor the specific explanation offered by elitist theory seems applicable here.

Elitist theory also posits that 'experts' will be more competent than 'ordinary citizens'. Content analysis was not useful in assessing the validity of this hypothesis. To

test this hypothesis a further phase of data collection was undertaken.

Stage three of the 'competence test' comprised an examination, albeit an impressionistic one, of the debate in the Alberta legislative assembly over the Red Deer River dam decision. The Department of the Environment took the decision when the house was in recess. Therefore, no direct debate about the dam actually took place. Approximately one year after the decision was made, there was an opposition motion presented to the assembly on March 8, 1978. The motion asked for a special session of the Standing Committee on Public Affairs to receive representations from Albertans concerned about the Red Deer River dam decision (Mr. Clark, Hansard, 1978:112). Debate of this motion took place over a period of two days, March 9 and March 16. Both debates were of approximately one hour in length.

A thorough reading of the debate left the impression that elected government officials knew even less about the issues surrounding the dam decision than did the 'ordinary citizens' of the river basin. Those taking part in the debate included MLA's from electoral constituencies covering the Red Deer River basin. It would be expected that especially those MLA's from the region would have intimate and accurate knowledge of such a large and consequential project as the Red Deer River dam. Almost every MLA who rose to speak during the debate presented as fact some statement or opinion about the dam and

its effects. These 'factual' statements ranged from the 'almost correct' to the exaggerated through to the grossly inaccurate. In addition, several statements were made which appeared rather confused and confusing.

For example, Mr. Taylor, MLA for Drumheller, spoke of the cost comparisons (Hansard,1978:118). He claimed that the cost of the site 11 option was \$85 million compared to \$52 million for site 6, the alternative chosen. Earlier that same day the Minister of the Environment revealed, in a response to an opposition question, the costs to be estimated at \$62 million and \$72 million for sites 6 and 11 respectively. The question of costs is especially important as it was the comparatively higher cost of site 11 which lead the government to reject it as an acceptable alternative. Miss Hunley, MLA for Rocky Mountain House, suggested that offstream storage in Sylvan Lake, as suggested by the ECA, could destroy the lake's recreational value (Hansard,1978:242). In fact, the ECA concluded that, although not guaranteed, offstream storage could very well be of recreational value to Sylvan Lake through stabilization of water levels in the lake (1977(a):104-105). This particular comment is more disturbing given that the final decision taken by the government included a water level stabilization program for Sylvan Lake. She also claimed offstream storage would have detrimental effects on Sylvan Lake due to an increase in the amount of siltation in the lake. An Alberta Environment study (1976:9), which was one of the publically released information

bulletins, claims that offstream storage would have, at worst, a negligible effect on siltation in Sylvan Lake.

Claims regarding the irrigation, flood control, and erosion control potential of a dam at site 6 tended to be more exaggerated. Mr. Taylor, for instance, claimed that site 6 had flood control benefits whereas site 11 did not. In fact, one of the most flood-prone areas in the basin is at Sundre which is upstream from the proposed site 6 dam. A major advantage of the site 11 dam would be in its flood control characteristics (ECA,1977(a):76). Mr. Taylor also claimed that site 6 provided erosion control for Drumheller (Hansard,1978:119). Erosion at Drumheller is rather extensive but a dam in the upper reaches of the river, of which site 6 is one, offered very little, if any, erosion protection for Drumheller (Alberta Environment, 1974:plate 6 and 1975:137). The main cause of erosion at Drumheller is the action of heavy rains on the barren banks of the river (ECA,1977(a):83).

Dr. Horner, then Deputy Premier, made statements concerning the irrigation potential of the site 6 dam. He claimed that the 2200 acres of class 1 and 2 soil flooded at Spruce View was a small price to pay for the additional " hundreds of thousands of improved acres down the road for east-central Alberta " (Hansard,1978:237). Although, a dam at site 6 may have a beneficial effect in terms of providing water for some market gardening, the potential was extremely limited (ECA, 1976(a):13). The main flow regulation potential of a dam in the

upper portion of the river was in increasing the low winter flows. Water for irrigation is required in the summer months. Whatever water could be provided for irrigation at a point so far downstream would be very limited. Alberta Environment, in any case, must have considered such a potential as minimal since irrigation was not mentioned in any of the feasibility and impact studies.

The most puzzling statement came from Mr. Walker, the member from Macleod. Part of his remarks made reference to the practise, in Switzerland, of having national referendums on important projects. Mr. Walker commented: " ... it sounds very good to have everybody vote on a major project. But if we're having difficulties here in this House and in this Legislature making a decision and we have all the consultative opinions and technical advise we can possibly have, how can we ask the general populace to come to a sensible, knowledgeable decision without that advice? " (Hansard,1978:244; emphasis added). Add to this Mr. Cookson's (Lacombe) admission that he had not read the final ECA report (Hansard,1978:245), and it becomes problematic as to whether those called upon to make the actual decision were any more competent than the ordinary citizens of the Red Deer River valley.

A final piece of data bearing upon the question of competence emerges from the personal interviews. Several of those interviewed were asked questions about the competence or quality of public submissions at the hearings. Notably, Mr. J. Kinisky, former vice-chairman of the ECA, commented that his experience at

Red Deer did not, in fact, differ from his experiences in other ECA hearings (personal interview, March 12, 1979). He argued that ordinary people do show a different, but nonetheless competent, body of knowledge in dealing with some extremely complex technical topics (a perusal of the list of ECA hearings topics bears out the range of complex topics discussed, see footnote #3 of Chapter Six). Mr. Kinisky noted that more often than not the technical experts, called to task during question periods, were unable to answer the questions of ordinary citizens. Moreover, he claimed that oftentimes a river basin engineer was "shot down" by ordinary uneducated farmers. Coupled with the results of the content analysis and the legislative debate analysis, it appears safe to say that the elitist tenets regarding competence have very little in the way of empirical support.

This is not to argue that technical experts have nothing to offer. Obviously, experts have certain skills which most people are not trained in. For instance, one would be hard pressed to argue that a group of uneducated farmers could undertake an engineering feasibility study - that is not the point, though. Ordinary citizens, by and large, do understand the issues in complex public decisions but in a different way. Their language and concepts may be relatively unsophisticated but nonetheless legitimate. Furthermore, questions asked by the public connote areas for 'expert data collection' rather than displaying incompetence on the part of either the public or the experts. Although, it still remains that claims of public incompetence

provide neither general nor specific explanation of public participation failure.

(3) Apathy.

Assessment of the propositions regarding apathy followed the same path as the above investigations - i.e. several measures and sources of data were utilized. The content analysis and two surveys, carried out under the auspices of the ECA, provided the empirical basis for evaluation. The general hypothesis to be tested is that those opposing the official plan were more likely to be apathetic in a political sense. This general hypothesis implies three specific hypotheses related to three senses in which apathy, as a concept, can be used: 1. most of the public will not take part in the Red Deer River participation, 2. only those directly affected will participate, and 3. those opposing the plan will participate at a 'lower' level of activity.

Results of the two public opinion polls commissioned by the ECA (1976(b), 1977(b)) will be presented first. The results of these surveys are presented in assessment of the claim that the public is generally apathetic toward political activity. Each of the surveys was conducted after its respective set of public hearings.

The phase one ECA poll did not ask questions regarding knowledge of or attendance at the public hearings. A question

was asked bearing upon awareness of problems in the Red Deer River and did provide some indirect evidence. It was found that only 42% of respondents were even aware that there were any problems with the river (ECA,1976(b):8).

Overall awareness of river problems increased by the time the phase two poll (ECA,1977(b)) was conducted. In 1977, 58% of respondents were aware of river problems (p. 9). Although, only 14% were aware of the various alternatives proposed as solutions to the vagaries of the Red Deer River (p. 18); whereas 28% of respondents were aware of the proposed damsites in the 1976 poll (ECA,1976(b):19). The 1977 poll asked questions more directly related to the public participation programme than did the 1976 poll. Thirty-five percent of respondents in 1977 were familiar with the ECA public hearings but only 4% had attended any of the hearings themselves (ECA,1977(b):32-33).

The results of the ECA polls tend to support elitist propositions. A fairly large portion of the population were aware of the problems being investigated but the number of people involved to any greater extent rapidly declines. Not only do the percentages change, from 58% to 35% to 4%, but the changes are in the direction predicted by elitist theory. Thus, it appears there is support for the claims of general public apathy.

Elitist theory also predicts that only those directly affected will be moved to participate. This claim must be rejected outright, as only 46 of 207 (22%) participants were directly affected (see table 5-3). Moreover, substantial numbers of parti-

cipants were from areas outside the river basin.

Whether the information made available to the public was used or not comprised a test of the third apathy hypothesis. Elitist theory predicts that supporters will tend to use the public information to a greater extent than will opponents. In fact, a newspaper story in November of 1975, the very month that the hearings began, carried a headline which read: " Dam Site Proposal Greeted With Apathy " (Edmonton Journal, 25 November 1975:3). This particular newspaper story quotes a Town of Innisfail employee as saying that very few people had borrowed the Alberta Environment reports available in the town hall.

With respect to the content analysis, elitist theory suggests that those supporting the government proposal would make more use of the pre-hearing reports than would opponents. Not taking the opportunity to become fully informed would affirm claims of apathy.

Table 5-6 shows that 86.4% of supporters read the reports and that 84.6% of opponents had read the flow regulation reports. Based on a significance level of .9249 the null hypothesis is accepted - there is no difference between supporters and opponents in terms of reading the available information. Accepting the null hypothesis means that supporters are no more likely to have examined the reports released by the ECA than are opponents. Thus, no empirical support can be given to the specific apathy hypothesis using the 'reports' indicator.

Table 5-6

Percentage of supporters and opponents
who had read the dam reports

		Reports	
		read	not read
Position	support	19 86.4%	3 13.6%
	oppose	148 84.6%	27 15.4%
Chi-square = .0089 significance = .9249 phi = .01571			

The final measure of apathy used in the content analysis was whether or not an actor re-appeared in the 1977 hearings. Elitist theory predicts that supporters would be more likely to have presented briefs at both sessions of public hearings. The

Table 5-7

Percentage of supporters and opponents
reappearing at the 1977 hearings

		Reappearance	
		yes	no
Position	support	5 35.7%	9 64.3%
	oppose	46 35.7%	83 64.3%
Chi-square = .08388 significance = .7721 phi = .00034			

null hypothesis is that the percentage of supporters reappearing at the 1977 hearings will be the same as the percentage of opponents

who did likewise. Table 5-7 presents the results. Percentages of supporters and opponents who came before the 1977 hearings after having appeared in 1975 was exactly the same (35.7%). This finding contradicts the prediction of elitist theory. Thus, the third apathy hypothesis has very little empirical support.

Apathy appears important, to this point it is the only elitist variable to have some empirical verification. Although an empirical foundation is there it is not terribly strong. Apathy appears important in a macro than a micro sense. The data reveal that only a few people were interested in and/or actually took part in the participation programme; but, apathy does not seem to be important in explaining the emergent opposition.

(4) Values.

The elitist hypothesis here is that there will be a consensus on overall objectives of the official plan, just as there is consensus regarding the major value premises of society. Data collected to assess this hypothesis came from several sources and utilized several collection techniques.

First of all, there are claims by Alberta's political decision-makers that most Albertans agree with the general provincial objectives contained in the flow regulation proposal. For instance, Dr. Trost, former chairman of the ECA, claims there is general consensus as to the overall objective of "maintenance and restoration of an environment best suited to man and other

forms of life now and for the future " (Trost,1972:1). The objective is rather vague and of the 'motherhood' type but it is claimed that nonetheless a consensus does exist.

More important is the more general objective of rapid economic development and growth through decentralization of industry and population, which defines, it appears, the form of life referred to above. As stated in the terms of reference for the flow regulation studies - water shall not be a limiting factor in economic and social growth in Alberta (Alberta Environment,1975:1). The decentralization policy was part of the platform, however invisible, of the Progressive Conservative party who won the election of 1971. In 1974, the same political party won a landslide victory which could be taken as reflecting provincial consensus for PC policies of which decentralization was one. Victory in an election as empirical support for the consensus claim is rather weak given the essentially 'issue-less' nature of recent elections (cf. Segal,1974:37).

In fact, much of the government's defence of the decision they took hinged on a "silent majority" argument. Those who raised so much opposition were simply those hurt by the decision, and there will always be those who have to suffer in making decisions for progress - according to one government MLA, Mr. Stewart from Wainwright (Hansard,1978:1583). Decisions regarding major physical changes which benefit the majority quite often place some hardship upon a few and they, then, complain. Those who will benefit, the majority, remain silent. Mr. Trynchy

expressed it in this manner:

I wonder ... as we go through these hearings if the true meaning was really known, if all the people affected, and if that dam - we'll use the one at Red Deer - affects 12,000 people ... let's say it does, because in time it probably will - for water at Red Deer and downstream. If all those people were allowed a vote, how would it go? Will we have 10,000 in favor and 2,000 against? But that's one of the decisions you have to make, because the ones who do all the talking are the ones who are affected; and rightfully so, they should. But when you make decisions you have to make them not just for one group of people, a small or a large group; you have to make them for the betterment of all Albertans ... the good Lord himself couldn't satisfy all the people (Hansard,1978:1583).

Not only did the government and the silent majority endorse the decentralization policy but the regional planning commission had also adopted it. Two studies (RDRPC,1969 and 1972) carried out by the regional planning commission firmly placed priority on the concept of decentralization and growth. In a study of the provincial setting of its own procedures, the RDRPC set as an objective of that study the " growing concern over the rapid growth of population in and around the two primate cities of Edmonton and Calgary " (RDRPC,1972:3). The study went on to show that Red Deer was a prime candidate for decentralization. Thus, it would appear that some of the major political actors concurred on the policy of decentralization.

Was there consensus, though, among the river basin's residents as implied and exclaimed by those mentioned above? Three surveys carried out in the Red Deer River basin provided some data for analysis. Among other things, all three surveys

attempted to discern the feelings of basin residents toward issues of importance to the Red Deer River valley. Among those issues were the dam proposal itself and the policies encouraging industrial location within the river valley.

The regional planning commission (RDRPC,1976) mailed questionnaires to 30,000 households during the summer of 1974. Approximately 3400 questionnaires were returned. The age and residential characteristics of respondents did not fairly represent the actual structure of age and residence in the basin (p. 2). Lack of representativeness of the sample, then, casts some doubt on the veracity of responses in their depiction of the opinions of valley residents. It is also interesting to note that the results of the survey, which were not all that favorable to the policies touched on, were not published until 1976, even though the issues bore directly on the subject of the D of E studies and the ECA hearings. At any rate, some of the findings relevant to the present investigation are reported below.

The main result of the survey indicated, at best, mixed reactions toward decentralization and varying perceptions of what decentralization meant in concrete terms. Most respondents (67%) desired some decentralization of services and facilities, especially shopping and education facilities (pp. 3-4). Only 35% favored some form of rapid industrial development compared to 44% who favored retention of the present character of the basin communities; a further 20% favored slow, gradual, moderate growth (p. 5)

Authors of the report curiously collapsed those in favor of rapid growth and those in favor of moderate growth into one category, then claiming that 55% of basin residents favored industrial development - thereby implying and concluding that there was subscription to the government policy (p. 5). It would have been as logical to aggregate those in favor of moderate growth with those favoring retention of existing community character, thereby concluding that 64% of respondents favored slow, small growth. This alternative suggestion is shored up by other findings of the study: 1) by far the greatest response was in favor of steady population growth, 2) 85% favored development of small industry, 3) 75% favored growth of shopping facilities, 4) 75% were against development of any type of pollution-prone industry (p. 6), and 5) written comments overwhelmingly favored small industrial growth based on renewable as opposed to non-renewable resources (p. 7). Thus, it would seem that the area residents were not particularly amenable to the government's policy and that, certainly, there was not a consensus on overall objectives.

Finally, the dam issue itself was subjected to the test of public opinion. The item used as a measure was a vague, general question related to the building of a dam on the Red Deer River. In its vague form the item found 55% in favor, 22% opposed, and 23% with no opinion (p. 9). Those in favor of and against building a dam still desired slow growth both in terms of population and industry (p. 12). " Industry was not considered a good motivation for this (dam) project; instead it was felt that

the purpose of a dam, if built, should be to provide irrigation, flood control, and a guaranteed stable water supply for the smaller communities around Red Deer " (p. 13). Results of the RDRPC survey, then, do not suggest consensus or agreement with the government's articulated overall objective.

Of the two ECA (1976(b) and 1977(b)), the phase two poll contained more information relevant to the discussion at this juncture. Questions in the 1976 poll did not specifically deal with policies of decentralization and growth. Although, 59% of respondents felt future growth would require more water and 71% were in favor of flow control in the future (ECA, 1976 (b):12-14). Despite the opinions regarding flow control very few of those questioned felt that the proposed damsites were suitable (p. 20) - of those in favor of flow control only 16% saw site 6 as satisfactory and 17% saw site 7 as appropriate whereas 43% were in favor of site 11, with respective opposition at 39%, 41%, and 15%. Admittedly, though, a substantial number of respondents had no opinion on the various damsites (from 42% to 47%).

Item 17 of the phase two survey asked if " you would like to see more industry in this area in the future? " (ECA, 1977(b):38). 60% of the respondents agreed that they would like to see more industry locate in the area (p. 38). A problem arises in interpreting what the phrase 'more industry' means to those responding to the question. The only indication comes in the results of questions related to land use in the basin. More

agriculture (48% and 22%) and more recreation (12% and 24%) ranked higher than more industry (12% and 20%) as the best and second best ways of utilizing the land (p. 41). Location of coal-related industries was seen in a particularly unfavorable light - 48% opposed compared to 38% in favor (p. 42). Given that 52% favored building a dam (p. 40), the results here appear remarkably similar to the results of the RDRPC study done three years earlier.

Consequently, it appears that these secondary sources of data do not provide an empirical base for the elitist claims referring to values or overall objectives. Most people, it seems, did not favor any kind of rapid growth, especially that dependent on the location of large, pollution-prone industrial projects. Though the conclusion that a majority disagreed with the government's overall objectives has only slightly more empirical strength, there certainly was not anything which could be termed a consensus. At best, there were mixed feelings but there was not the mass of support implied by the 'silent majority argument'.

Finally, the content analysis contained a category regarding the government objectives. Originally three categories were coded: agreement with, disagreement with, and conditional agreement with overall government goals. Given the results of the analysis of secondary data it was decided to collapse the information into just two categories: agree and disagree. The category of conditional agreement was included as disagreement

because most often those coded as in conditional agreement favored some growth but in a very slow steady fashion and/or agreed with the concept of flow control but for reasons other than for industrial growth. Table 5-8 presents the findings.

Table 5-8

Percentage of supporters and opponents
in agreement with overall government objectives

		Objectives	
		agree	disagree
Position	support	10 83.3%	2 16.7%
	oppose	20 16.9%	98 83.1%
		Chi-square = 23.43011 significance = .000 phi = .45607	

Elitist theory would predict that there would not be any significant difference between supporters and opponents with regard to their stances related to overall objectives. The null hypothesis, then, would be that there is a difference in the 'objectives stance' between supporters and opponents. A chi-square of 23.43011 at a significance level of .000 demands acceptance of the null hypothesis. Opposition to the government proposal does not appear to be the result of dispute over 'technical details' as implied by the elitist framework but rather over genuine conflict of values or objectives.

In terms of the case at hand, everyone is assumed, by elitist theory at least, to agree with the government's

policy of rapid economic growth through decentralization of industry and population. The emergence of opponents is explained, by elitist theory, simply as those 'hurt' by the plan. Data from several sources does not provide empirical support for the elitist explanation. In fact, the relationships here are the strongest of all reported to this point ($\phi = .45607$). Once again the content analysis fails to add to the critically low amount of empirical support for the elitist paradigm.

(5) Socioeconomic status.

Test of the elitist proposition concerning SES uses the proxy variable of 'place of residence'. Elitist theory claims that those of high SES are politically more active, a condition actually necessary for the smooth functioning of the political sub-system. Implied in this tenet is that those engaging in 'higher' forms of political activity are more likely to reside in urban areas. In fact, the elitist approach has claimed there is empirical foundation to the claim that urbanites are politically more active. Moreover, the theory holds that this situation is the most appropriate because urban dwellers tend to exhibit those personal qualities required for political decision-making (see Chapter Four, pp. 138-139). Elitist theory would, then, make two inter-related hypotheses: 1) participants, in general, are more likely to reside in urban areas, and 2) supporters are more likely to be urban dwellers. As with the other elitist

claims more than one source of data was utilized.

The ECA opinion polls provided some indications of residence and political activism. Both polls asked respondents about their awareness of problems in the Red Deer River. In 1976, urban areas showed the highest level of awareness of problems, as is shown in table 5-9. Increases in awareness in

Table 5-9

Awareness of river problems
by area of residence*

Area	Awareness	
	yes '76	'77
1. mountain area around Sundre	28%	72%
2. Sylvan Lake and northwest area	49%	70%
3. Red Deer	64%	70%
4. Red Deer-Carstairs corridor	43%	60%
5. Big Valley-Drumheller	44%	49%
6. Hanna-Bassano-Brooks	10%	30%

*source - ECA Phase Two Opinion Survey, 1977, pg.7

1977 were most significant in rural areas, especially around Sundre where the change was from 28% to 72%. By 1977, awareness of river problems was not especially prominent in urban areas.

A question concerning awareness of the public hearings comprised part of the 1977 poll. Of those who were aware of the hearings (35%), urban residents did not dominate (ECA, 1977(b): 33a). The greatest percentage of people aware of the hearings came

from the area around Sundre (47%). 42% of respondents who were Red Deer residents knew about the public hearings, followed by two rural areas around Sylvan Lake and in the Red Deer-Carstairs corridor (40% and 35% respectively).

The content analysis produced somewhat the same results. Initially three residence categories were coded: rural, town, and city. Of the hearings participants 39.5% were from rural areas, 13.3% were from towns, and 47.1% were from cities. Given that the basin population/residence structure was 50.3% rural, 19.5% town, and 30.1% city (Gill and Murri, 1975:23), it would appear that urbanites took part in the hearings to an extent greater than would be expected simply by chance.

Table 5-10
Percentage of supporters and opponents
by place of residence

		Residence		
		rural	town	city
Position	support	3 14.3%	0	18 85.7%
	oppose	77 41.8%	27 14.7%	80 43.5%
		Chi-square = 13.78431		
		significance = .001		
		Cramer's V = .25931		

Elitist theory predicts that supporters are more likely to reside in urban areas. Therefore, the null hypothesis would be that there is no difference in residence between supporters and opponents. On the basis of the results shown in table 5-10 the null hypothesis is rejected, as 85.7% of supporters are urban

residents compared to 43.5% of opponents.

A further test was carried out here to eliminate the empty cell. Two categories only, rural and urban, were used by combining the town and city classifications. This method of combination complies with the census definition of urban centres as settlements with population over 1,000. The null hypothesis is again rejected. Table 5-11 shows the same basic results as table 5-10 but with the strength of the relationship reduced somewhat as the percentage of urban opponents rose from 43.5% to 58.3%. The level of significance also declined from

Table 5-11

Percentage of supporters and opponents
residing in rural and urban areas

		Residence	
		rural	urban
Position	support	3 14.3%	18 85.7%
	oppose	77 41.8%	107 58.2%
Chi-square = 4.9149 significance = .0266 phi = .17133			

.001 to .0266.

The data gathered bolster the theoretical claims with regard to residence (or SES) to some extent. Urbanites were more politically aware and were more likely to participate in the hearings. Although an empirical foundation emerged it is not very strong.

The SES or residence hypothesis was the only one which had substantial empirical support, in addition to the general apathy hypothesis. This finding corresponds to the most consistent research result of elitist theory: that 'higher class' individuals are more politically active than 'lower class' people. Such a result represents, though, an empirical generalization only; it does not explain in and of itself. Nor does the SES result aid in explaining the opposition at Red Deer for, in fact, only 13.6% (18 of 125) of urban participants supported the official plan. As such, it would appear that other explanatory means must be used.

Discussion of Findings

Table 5-12

Summary of elitist hypotheses
and research findings

<u>Category</u>	<u>Hypothesis</u>	<u>Finding</u>
1. self-interest	1.1 plan supporters are more likely to have a broad rather than a narrow outlook than opponents	rejected
	1.2 the public is generally self-interested	rejected
	1.3 those directly affected are more likely to oppose the plan	accepted with qualification
2. competence	2.1 plan supporters are likely to be more competent than opponents	rejected
	2.2 the public is generally incompetent	rejected with qualification
	2.3 political experts are more competent than the public	rejected

3. apathy	3.1 the public is generally apathetic	accepted
	3.2 only those directly affected will participate	rejected
	3.3 supporters will be involved to a greater degree than opponents	rejected
4. values	4.1 all will agree on overall plan objectives	rejected
5. SES	5.1 urban residents are more likely to be public participants	accepted
	5.2 supporters are more likely to reside in urban areas	rejected

The findings presented above, and the analysis which emerges therefrom, must be seen the light of a number of methodological limitations or qualifications. Only a very few participants supported the government proposal. Of the 258 cases coded, in the content analysis, 13 were lost due to keypunch error and inability to discern a position in the brief, among other reasons. Supporters accounted for only 9.4%, or 23, of the 245 cases used in the analysis. Because of the low number of supporters many tables had cells with very low absolute numbers, with at least one case of an empty cell. With small numbers, probabilities calculated in the statistical analysis are not as certain as would be desired.

The second problem, which appears to plague much statistical analysis in social science, is the low measures of association. Phi was used in most cases as a measure of the strength of the relationship between variables. In most cases phi was somewhat low, ranging from .15635 to .45607. Typically the phi measure was around .2 which indicates rather weak relationships.

Despite these limitations the data from the content analysis and from other sources do indicate 'empirical directions'. Data from other sources did, in most cases, add weight to the findings of the content analysis. Therefore, the findings, in total, should be taken as giving reasonable empirical support to the conclusions reached.

Emerging from the most general propositions of the elitist approach is a hypothetical profile of public participants in general and therefore of the Red Deer River public participants specifically. Those general propositions are: 1) political instability will result from too much public participation, and 2) too much public participation will involve too many people who are not capable, in several senses, of making public decisions. Testing the elitist tenets meant testing that implied hypothetical profile. Elitist theory suggests that the general public and, therefore, the majority of those participating in Red Deer do not possess certain personal attributes. Flowing from the elitist claims is a profile of those supporting the plan devised by the experts. Supporters will: 1) be of high SES - in this case, will reside in urban areas, 2) have a broad, as opposed to a narrow public perspective,, 3) be more competent, and 4) be more politically active. In contradistinction, opponents will reside in rural areas, have a narrow perspective, be less competent, and will be less motivated. Both supporters and opponents will, though, agree on overall plan objectives.

Perusal of table 5-12 above shows quite clearly that the profile predicted by the elitist paradigm is seriously lacking in empirical support. The hypothesized personal deficiencies of opponents simply were not there. Supporters were no more likely, and in some cases were even less likely, to have a broader perspective, be more competent, and be more interested in politics than opponents. Neither is there the predicted agreement on overall objectives or values. Thus, it appears that the opposition which emerged in the Red Deer River public participation experience cannot be explained by reference to the personal characteristics of participants.

Only two elitist claims, hypotheses 3.1 and 5.1, were accepted. This study found evidence of a generally apathetic public - very few were aware of or participated in the decision process - and those who did participate were likely to be of higher SES (as measured through the proxy variable of place of residence). These two particular hypotheses are general rather than specific and as such do not aid in explaining the Red Deer River failure.

As has been argued elsewhere in this thesis, these two claims are empirical generalizations rather than explanatory statements. Without the weight of the other elitist hypotheses (i.e. the personal profiles) the findings concerning apathy and SES are of little explanatory value. Moreover, the entire elitist paradigm then loses any empirical base and does not provide an explanation of the observed failure at Red Deer.

ERRATUM

Page 198 is missing simply due to
a numbering error.

In anticipation of the following chapters, the two empirically acceptable elitist hypotheses make sense in the light of certain historical and structural variables. People do not participate in public decision-making because ours is a society which encourages apathy and frustrates attempts by most citizens to participate. Those who do participate are from the 'upper classes' but not because of some deeper personality characteristics but for perfectly understandable structural reasons - effective participation requires time, resources, and power. It is structural variables which are the foci of the conflict paradigm and the subject of the following three chapters.

Notes

1. Phi was chosen as a suitable measure of association for most of the content analysis results. This choice was made because most of the variables utilized consisted of nominal categories only and, most often, 2 X 2 tables were used.
2. Creating two categories for each measure was accomplished by determining the 'natural' break in the data. Frequencies of the two competence measures revealed that approximate 50/50 splits existed. For the 'issues' measure it was found that 52.4% of briefs addressed from 1 to 4 issues while 47.6% addressed more than 4 issues. A similar count showed that 51.2% of briefs were from .5 to 3.5 pages in length while the remainder were more than 3.5 pages in length. Hi and lo categories were created along the lines suggested by these breaks in the data.

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Chapter 6

Structural Relationships: Conflict Theory I

Introduction

The following three chapters report and analyze evidence gathered under the guide of conflict theory as outlined in earlier chapters. The particular methodology used here preclude the 'precision' of the research used earlier in testing elitist theory. Yet, this is not to say that the present methodology was any less rigorous and systematic. The main hypothesis and corollary propositions (see Chapter 4) were used as 'working' hypotheses as the research commenced. These working propositions provided the initial guidance and direction in delineating what sort of information needed to be collected. Information requisites are indicated in the particular kinds of questions asked by the theoretical framework utilized. Throughout the research an 'open mind' was

maintained, in that new directions could have, and did, unfold in the research process itself. What follows is the culmination of an 'inductive/deductive' procedure.

To reiterate, the main hypothesis of the conflict paradigm is that the hostility and opposition which emerged at Red Deer were the result of too little public participation. This directs attention to the power relationships involved, specifically that the public participants had very little power in that particular decision-making process. Three corollary, but interrelated, propositions are implied:¹ (1) that any lack of impact of public participants was due to the structural (power) relationships among the various actors, (2) that the public participation programme was more a 'public relations' effort than an attempt to discover and incorporate public desires and interests in the Red Deer decision, and (3) that economic interests dominated to the extent that other, competing interests were 'glossed over'. It must be noted that the hypotheses delineated identify the focus of the research. The intent of the research, in overall terms, was to determine whether the total pattern of events implied by the theory, as outlined in chapter four, have any basis of fact. Presentation of research findings and analysis and interpretation of those findings are found in this chapter and the two chapters immediately following. Each chapter addresses one of the three general conflict hypotheses.

The Conflict

A premise basic to conflict theory is that conflict of interests is endemic to our society. Thus, initially it must be shown that a genuine conflict of interests existed rather than some vague dispute over generalities as "conflict episodes take place over specific and tangible issues" (Jackson, 1975:6). Furthermore, disputes over interests, needs, or values are compounded and intensified by power imbalance. Immediately below is an indication of the conflict of interests which took place at Red Deer. The discussion here is 'introductory' as the specific nature of the conflict reveals itself in further discussion in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight. It is the power imbalance and the hostility generated by it which are analyzed in detail in the bulk of the following three chapters, and which form the basis of the explanation offered by conflict theory.

In the final analysis, the conflict at Red Deer involved essentially two apparently conflicting interests - agriculture and industry, although other interests were involved. On the one hand, there was the government actively pursuing a policy of developing the non-renewable resources of the area. This policy was seen as ascendent at, apparently, any cost. On the other hand, there were a large number of basin residents who, although vitally concerned with employment opportunities, did not see large-scale industrial development as suitable to the area since such developments

threatened a large tract of prime agricultural land, and a particular and concomitant 'way of life'.

The government of Alberta, through its decentralization policy, was promoting industrial development in the river basin. In fact, Premier Lougheed claimed, in his 1977 speech from the throne, that "we look at central Alberta as one of the keys in the total planning of our province's economic development" (Hansard, 1977:1437). Industrial development envisioned for the Red Deer River basin was not to be slow and moderate. The word which best describes the planned industrial expansion is "massive". Projected water requirements were based on a forecast which saw the location of 20 (later 12) world-scale (to use the government's own words) plants in the valley: 2 coal gasification, 4 coal-fired thermal electric, 2 coal washing, and 12 (6) petrochemical plants by the year 2004 (Siefried and Lefrancois, 1975:20-24; Alberta Environment, 1976:ii). Notwithstanding the fact that the probability of a level of activity at those projected rates was extremely uncertain, future water demand would outstrip present demand by 13 to 29 times by 2004. These kinds of developments can only be characterized as massive.

Opposing these government objectives were the desires of a large number of basin residents. Most wanted to see some growth but only small, moderate growth based on small industrial and agricultural enterprises. Opposition to coal-related industrial growth was very pronounced, and it was coal-related industry which required the bulk of the projected water demand.

At the base of the opposition was a concern for destruction of prime agricultural land and the 'rural way of life'.

Industry based on non-renewable resources was not considered appropriate especially given the existence of a resource which had no apparent time-limits (the land). The ECA polls and the RDRPC survey did show a clear concern for employment since many young people could not find work in the basin. Much of the potential for work was undercut with the increasing mechanization and 'industrialization' of farms and by the export of, rather than processing of, raw farm produce. In addition, most people were willing to live with flow control if means other than the proposed damsite were used.

This sets the stage for the analysis to follow. It boiled down to a conflict of two basic interests. The government, along with a few others, was promoting a rapid and massive industrial development program. A dam at either site 6 or 7 was integral to that program, or so they claimed. Meanwhile, a large number of individuals and organizations saw an alternative 'end-state' - agricultural and small industrial development. Mr. Clark, leader of the opposition, said it this way: "it's that sort of fundamental difference in philosophy (i.e. interests) between those who are fast-buck, get-rich-quick types and those who recognize the fundamental value of land as our most precious resource that... sets the line of debate" (Hansard, 1977:1579). With the conflict delineated there remains only to determine whether or not the theoretical claims, and therefore the explanation,

of the conflict paradigm have any empirical validity. If it can be shown, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the hypotheses of the conflict perspective are empirically valid then the explanation of the Red Deer events is at hand.

Outcomes Versus Desires

The second component of the basic conflict proposition is that an unequal distribution of power intensifies conflict. Conflict is endemic to our society but not necessarily a problem - problems result from power differentials. Thus, conflict theory is more interested in power relationships than conflicts of interest per se. In the case at hand, it is the impact of public participants on the final decision which is of interest. An initial assessment of the impact of public participation upon the final decision made is the first indication of the power of the public. To determine the amount of impact, the final decision need only be compared with the recommendations or desires of the public participants. Recommendations of the ECA, as contained in its final report, fairly represent the wishes of those who took part in the public participation programme. In other words, the concepts of 'the general public', 'public participants', or 'public participation' are basically operationalized as the ECA for the purposes of this study. In addition, the other public participation technique used at Red Deer, a public advisory committee, is also part of the operational definition of

'public participation'. Identification of public desires also took place in an examination of some river basin surveys. Once identified, those interests will be used as a yardstick in measuring the extent of influence of public participants.

On July 18, 1977 the Environment Conservation Authority released its final report entitled, Flow Regulation of the Red Deer River: Report and Recommendations. This final report contained a total of 89 specific suggestions regarding the river and the basin. Recommendations covered a wide range of topics including land use and water management, water quality, floods, erosion, recreation, water demands, and river basin management (ECA, 1977(b):51-109). Recommendations were based upon public opinion expressed at the hearings and analyzed by the ECA, using Codinvolve (p. 35). A summary of major recommendations is presented below, which is illustrative rather than exhaustive:

- (1) land use and water management
 - that all relevant government agencies co-operate in producing an integrated land use, resource development, and water management plan for the Red Deer River basin.
 - that public participation be an integral component of a river basin plan;
- (2) water quantity
 - recognition of the effects of forest operations, agriculture, vegetation, streams, and wetlands have on the flow in a river;
- (3) water quality
 - further study be undertaken to locate causes of oxygen depletion in the river.
 - that pollution control and pollution control education programs be aimed at the several sources of pollution including agricultural operations and municipal and industrial concerns, to the end of improving water quality;

- (4) floods
 - use of zoning to restrict development in flood plains,
 - need for dykes to protect existing flood-prone areas in Sundre and Drumheller;
- (5) erosion
 - implementation of erosion control measures along the river, especially re-vegetation programs;
- (6) recreation
 - need for a basin-wide master recreation plan, as the natural state of the river valley makes tourism an extremely suitable industry;
- (7) water demands
 - maintenance of minimum flows be given priority
 - industrial water needs be met through alternatives other than a dam,
 - industrial concerns, especially coal-related industries, be encouraged to provide for their own needs through offstream storage,
 - municipal water demands require technical solutions regarding withdrawal techniques, not flow regulation;
- (8) **river** basin management
 - watershed management and improvement be encouraged through public education and legislation,
 - inter-basin transfer of water be studied as a future management option,
 - offstream storage in existing water bodies be endorsed as a favorable water management strategy, using Sylvan and Buffalo lakes,
 - sites 6 and 7 be no longer considered as potential damsites and that study of a site upstream of Sundre (site 11) be undertaken to be used if a dam is necessary in the future.

Damsites 6 and 7 as proposed by the government were not seen as viable flow regulation alternatives. Elimination of sites 6 and 7 from further consideration, in favor of offstream storage, must be seen as the major recommendation by the ECA (i.e. the public participation programme). Projected municipal demands did not warrant building a dam, as they were negligible. Industrial demands in the foreseeable future were

better handled by future plants providing their own water through construction of facilities off the river itself. The economic, social and environmental costs of a dam were seen as too high given the water needs to be satisfied. Other basin water problems could also be alleviated by alternatives other than a dam. If a dam were necessary at some future date, study of an upstream site now would prepare the area should the need arise.

Two other public participation techniques were used at Red Deer: a public advisory committee (PAC) and surveys. Both techniques yielded results similar to those of the public hearings - opposition to the proposed damsites and support for upstream damsites and/or different alternatives altogether.

As indicated in Chapter Three, the Department of the Environment (D of E) put together a public advisory committee to provide "a channel of communication between the residents of the basin and the Minister" (Alberta Environment, 1975:2). PAC was to provide public input into the studies themselves, as well as carry information back to the public. According to the Red Deer Advocate (7 December, 1973:1) PAC strongly urged the Minister to include site 11 in those sites destined for intensive study. The newspaper was reporting on a forum that took place at Red Deer College on December 4, 1973. County of Red Deer representatives on PAC reported that PAC had recommended site 11 because of concern over the potentially negative impacts of the proposed sites. Mayor R. Caveny of Sundre, who was on PAC, confirmed the newspaper report: "since

its inception, the Public Advisory Committee have recommended a damsite upstream from the Raven and, a check of the minutes of the earliest meetings of this group will bear this statement (out)" (Proceedings, 1975(II):89).

Gill and Murri (1975:136) found support for site 11, if a dam was necessary, in spite of the lack of information regarding sites 6 and 7. Strength of concern over potential damsites decreased with increasing distance from the river. Much of what Gill and Murri reported in their findings emerged from question they submitted to the RDRPC (1976) study. Findings of that survey are reported in Chapter Five and basically showed that in 1974 few people favored large-scale industrial development and the construction of a dam concomitant to that development.

The two ECA opinion polls asked questions concerning potential damsites. In 1976 opinions regarding the various damsites were solicited, whereas in 1977 opinions were collected regarding dams versus other alternatives. Site 11 was by far preferred in the earlier study (ECA, 1976:20), although no reference was made to other options. Preferences contained in the phase two poll were similar to the first poll. Of those aware of the various alternatives, 52% preferred a dam while 20% preferred offstream storage and 6% preferred a combination of the two (p. 40).

In summary, it would appear that the ECA recommendations best express (or are the best 'operationalization' of) the desires of those involved in all phases of the public

participation at Red Deer. There was concern about the Red Deer River and its associated problems (floods, erosion, low flow) but there was equal concern over the building of a flow impoundment structure. At best, public participants were willing to accept the inevitability of a dam being built (Alberta Environment, 1975:133-134). If a dam had to be built one at site 11, upstream of Sundre, appeared as the most acceptable. There was also concern that programs be implemented to deal with quality, flood, erosion, and other problems (ECA, 1977(a):11-12; ECA, 1976:36-38).

A primary indication of the power of public participants is whether the public had any impact upon the decision made. On July 18, 1977 Dave Russell, then Minister of the Environment, announced that the government of Alberta had decided to build a dam on the Red Deer River at the location known as site 6 (D of E Press Release, 18 July, 1977). Work was to commence immediately on this multi-million dollar project. The cost of the total project was estimated at approximately \$61 million and work was expected to continue through 1984.

A dam at site 6 was the main component of the decision, but also included were five other elements in the water management scheme: (1) flood protection dykes at Sundre, (2) flood protection dykes at Drumheller, (3) erosion control measures along the river, (4) pollution control measures within the river basin, and (5) "implementation, where applicable, of the recommendations of the Environment Conservation Author-

ity's report" (D of E Press Release, 18 July 1977:1). In addition, study would begin into the feasibility of a water stabilization program for Sylvan and Buffalo Lakes. The plan was seen as providing substantial benefits to the Red Deer River basin and would "assure the long-range stability and growth of this part of Alberta" (p. 2). Apparently 83 of the 89 ECA recommendations were being implemented.

The government, though, rejected the most important advice of the public participation programme - use of off-stream storage as the most appropriate strategy for industrial growth. As Mr. Russell said:

After careful consideration, the government did not accept the ECA recommendation to approve the concept of off-stream storage as a means to regulate the flow of the river. Flow regulation can be achieved more effectively by a dam at site 6 which will serve the best interests of long-term water management in the river. However, in accordance with the spirit of the ECA recommendation, land use and water management planning will proceed on a continuing basis in the Red Deer River Basin and will be an integral part of the water resources management strategy for the South Saskatchewan River Basin (D of E Press Release, 18 July 1977:11-12).

Programs aimed at flood and erosion control, pollution control, lake stabilization, and watershed management were necessary no matter what flow regulation strategy was chosen. Flow regulation, through a dam at any site or through offstream storage, could only address real, or perceived, problems of water supply. Flow regulation could do very little to alleviate other difficulties with the river. As such, the government had, then, rejected the basic wishes and desires of the public. Participants and basin residents in general were

willing to accept flow regulation, even a dam, but not a dam at site 6.

Government rationale for its decision was comprised of three primary elements: (1) industrial growth, (2) cost comparisons, and (3) the 'public interest'. A headline in the Calgary Herald (19 July 1977:1) read: "Development justifies dam". Throughout the four year history of the Red Deer River dam events, the water needs of projected (and government desired) industrial development were at the forefront. Coal-related industries - coal-washing, coal-gasification, and coal-fired thermal electric, a total of 6-8 plants (Alberta Environment, 1976:18) - required the majority of future water supply from the river (Mr. Russell, Hansard, 1977:1580). Of maximum withdrawal from the river of about 230-280 cfs, coal industries would need about 65% (Alberta Environment, 1975:20). The claim being that only a dam at site 6 could accomodate such projected (desired) growth. The question of industrial growth in the river valley appears at almost every point in the discussions to follow.

The minimal resource reserves in the Red Deer River valley were projected as having a 15-25 year productive life, as most reserves were not particularly large in size (RDRPC,1969). Given the state of resources and a need to develop them quickly, the cabinet was convinced a dam was needed sooner or later, according to Mr. Russell (Red Deer Advocate, 29 July 1977:1). The ECA recognized that a dam may be necessary sometime in the future, but certainly not within 10 years. The

urgency of a dam, in the government's view, led them to use cost comparisons as a dominant factor in defending their decision.

The total site 6 program (see above) was estimated at about \$62 million, although costs could vary greatly after final design plans were complete (Mr. Russell, Hansard, 1978: 104-106). Using offstream storage and a future dam at site 11 could cost in the area of \$78 million. Consequently, the cost of the ECA option was seen as prohibitive.

Reference to the best interests of Albertans as a whole (i.e. the public interest) comprised the last major component of the government's articulated rationale. As was reported in a local newspaper: "There's more to a dam than local social and ecological factors" (Red Deer Advocate, 18 July 1977:4). Included in this element of the rationalization was the 'silent majority' argument referred to in Chapter Five.

The point here is that the rationale presented rests on very questionable grounds, all of which is explicated in much more detail throughout this chapter and those following. It is sufficient at this juncture to only highlight the difficulties. First, the projections which were the basis of projected future industrial water demands were 'guesstimates', at best. Alberta Environment carried out the demand projections and the authors of that report admitted that "it is impossible to accurately forecast future activity, even with good data" (Seifried and Lefrancois, 1975:20). A group of Alberta scientists reached the very same conclusion regarding these

industrial forecasts (SAC, 1975:37).

Second, the cost estimates of site 6 were the subject of lively debate. Basic to the debate was the value placed on flooded agricultural land. Area residents felt, with justification, that the real cost of permanently taking prime agricultural land out of production was extremely underestimated in the concept of 'fair market value' (see for example, Myrna Manuel, Proceedings, 1977(I):7-20). In fact, the author of the cost/benefit study agreed that very few of his peers would accept the methods he used in calculating costs and benefits (Dr. D. Seastone, Proceedings, 1975(VI): 108-112).

Finally, the questionable foundation of the 'silent majority' argument was exposed in Chapter Five. Also, if the above arguments are suspect, reference to the public interest becomes problematic. That is, any assumptions about the public interest rests on the cost and industrial growth argument. Those initial premises are themselves questionable. These subjects are examined in much more detail later.

Important at this point is the fact that the public participation programme and public participants had very little impact upon the final decision reached. Government preference for the water management program determined was announced long before any substantial public participation. Comparison of the decision reached and public desires shows clearly that the government chose to ignore these desires. It now becomes imperative to discover why the public had very little impact

upon the decision. What follows attempts to answer that question by presenting empirical evidence used in assessing the three conflict hypotheses outlined earlier. Each of those hypotheses comprises the content of this chapter and Chapters Seven and Eight.

Structural Relationships

Examination of the structural relationships between the decision-making authority and the public participation programme comprises the content of the remainder of Chapter Six. The first of the three conflict hypotheses is concerned with the structural relationships among the actors in the Red Deer River episode. Conflict theory predicts that the structural (power) relationships will be such that public participants (here operationalized as the ECA and PAC) had no guarantee of being influential. It has been shown that public participation had very little impact upon the final Red Deer decision. The first component of the conflict explanation of the lack of impact, and subsequent hostile reactions, is contained in the 'structural relationship' hypothesis.

As such, research was aimed at determining, first, what could be termed the 'official doctrine' regarding planning and public participation. Concretization of the official doctrine obtains in the main public participation vehicles used: the ECA and PAC. The 'concrete doctrine' is the most important factor in determining the salient structural relationships.

The Official Doctrine

An official, if unwritten, policy of the government of Alberta is that there should be, and will be, public input into all major environmental and resource projects. In many places and at many times officials have stated that the government is committed to a policy of "open government" (see for example, Hansard, 1977:1596-;597). The words of W.J. Yurko, former Minister of the Environment, are illustrative of the official doctrine:

The government is firmly convinced that the public should be directly involved in establishing policies in the area of pollution control and resource development. In fact...we go further...we believe that this involvement should be solicited and encouraged. Some of the decisions required in natural resource management are of such complexity that no person...no authority...knows the right way ...only the cumulative direction of the people in total can be relied upon (Speeches, 1974: 43).

Government policy regarding public participation goes further. All major resource projects also require an environmental impact statement (Speeches, 1974:131). Furthermore, a separate act of the legislature is required to authorize any major water impoundments and diversions (Speeches, 1974: 165). These two statements illustrate very well the spoken policy - that public participation was not only considered important, but also absolutely essential, to decision-making in Alberta.

But, "idealism and practical democracy are not often

in total harmony" (Speeches, 1974:195). As such, the goal of direct public input finds more implementation in spoken rather than in actual policy. Two areas of concern emerge here: (1) legislation defining public participation and its role, and (2) the place of public participation in the decision-making process. As will be seen below, the reality very often does not match the rhetoric.

The Environment Conservation Authority

Most Alberta legislation provides for the possibility of participation rather than the requirement of public participation. One critical exception relates to the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB). Under section 42(2) of the Oil and Gas Conservation Act, no oil and/or gas resource project may be constructed without an authorizing permit from the board. No such public participation requirements are found in the Planning Act, for instance. In making a decision as to the suitability of granting a permit, the ERCB may hold public hearings. Planning legislation requires no more than the publication of hearing notices and development approvals, although the possibility of deputations at by-law hearings is accommodated (see sections 128 and 130-135 of the Planning Act). No legislative assurances exist that the public will be consulted about any changes which could occur from public decisions falling under the purview of these two acts.

The situation with the ECA, in its original form,

differed quite radically from the above. Original legislation saw the ECA as an 'ombudsman type' body. The ECA was to remain at arm's length from the government, as it was not intended to be a branch of any particular government department (Speeches, 1974:102). Its mandate called for the ECA to maintain a continuing review of government environmental policies and programs, and allowed the ECA to call for public hearings at its own discretion (see sections 7(1)(a) and (b), Environment Conservation Act). Autonomy for the ECA was important if the agency was to carry out its mandate to the cabinet without interference, and therefore it reported directly to the cabinet (see section 4 of the act). This agency was the major "mechanism for direct public participation and public hearings in the environmental planning process" (Speeches, 1974:67).

In its original form, the ECA was a grand experiment in public participation. The original legislation did not require public participation in specific instances but did provide a means by which the public could be involved. The ECA could call hearings on its own initiative, by request from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council (i.e. the cabinet), and/or upon receiving representations from the public. Most notable in the legislation is the lack of de jure control of the ECA, although the government did retain de facto control through its command of the ECA budget.

The basis of any power in the ECA was in its ability to call for public hearings. Any of a wide range of topics came under the ECA's discretion to call hearings, from enviro-

onment through social and economic aspects of policies, programs and projects (see section 3 of the act).² Even upon calling a set of hearings the ECA was powerless beyond recommendation. The ECA could only "make its recommendations and report thereon to the Lieutenant Governor in Council" (see section 7 of the act), whereas the ERCB, for instance, could issue or withhold permits thereby retaining some influence over the decisions it was involved in. What became of ECA recommendations was totally in the hands of the cabinet, or more specifically, the Cabinet Committee on Natural Resources and the Environment.

Thus, factors important to examining the structural relationships under consideration are identified in the ECA legislation. The ECA had some power (influence) in that it could call hearings and thereby bring past or future public decisions into the public eye. Public input could be solicited regarding specific matters or into more general policy areas.³ Whether public input would have any impact still remained problematic.

However, beginning in 1972 a series of events took place that seriously jeopardized the potential impact of the ECA as a vehicle for public participation. On August 22, 1972 the executive council of the newly-formed Progressive Conservative government of Alberta formally approved a major re-organization of the newly-created Department of the Environment. "Increased efficiency through better coordination and centralization" was given as the main reason for restructuring the D of E (Environment News, 1977, vol. 2, no. 9:3). Included

as part of the D of E changes were amendments to the Environment Conservation Act (Bill 42), especially to section 7 (1). With changes which began with bill 42, an erosion of the ECA's power and autonomy was to start a metamorphosis which ended in 1978 with the creation of the Environment Council of Alberta.

Amendment of section 7(1) of the act was the first major and, probably, the most important change to be made.

Section 7(1)(b) of the original act read as follows:

The Authority...may inquire into any matter pertaining to environment conservation and make its recommendations and report thereon to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

Bill 42 replaced the phrase 'Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council' with 'the Minister' in all clauses dealing with the functions of the ECA. This initial and seemingly minor change in actual fact made the ECA a branch of the Department of the Environment. In fact D of E organization charts began to show the ECA as part of the department. One change in wording effectively removed ECA autonomy.

The change in section was more extensive in effect than in wording. Responsibility for the ECA was transferred from the cabinet to the D of E (Hansard, 1972, No. 24:1).

Section 7(1)(b) was amended as follows:

The Authority...may after consultation with the Minister inquire into any matter pertaining to environment conservation and make its recommendations and report thereon to the Minister (emphasis added).

The ECA was now under de jure, as well as de facto, control of the D of E. Now the ECA could not call public hearings

at its own discretion, rather it had to first consult with the Minister to whom it reported. Amendments to the act brought an angry response from opposition parties and prompted the Public Advisory Committee on the Environment to pass a resolution requesting the government to rescind its amendment (PAC, 1972:302). The change in section 7(1) was seen as a very serious threat to the purpose of the ECA as an environmental watchdog.

There is no question that the power of the ECA, even in its original form, was limited. Maintaining some distance from the government was the only assurance that the ECA would or could be a 'watchdog' of any sort. The Authority recognized its limited position in admitting it was "quasi-judicial, appellate, advisory" (ECA, 1971:13). Although limited, the ECA understood the necessity for autonomy, as is seen in its guidelines for public participation:

Any instrument or device used to bring about public participation should itself be generally nonpartisan, without vested interests in the issues under discussion, and at arm's length from the Government itself. The Authority takes itself to be such an instrument (ECA, 1971:18, emphasis added).

The government responded to charges of 'stripping' the ECA by claiming that environmental priorities and better coordination made the ECA changes necessary. Mr. Yurko, then Minister, stated that for practical purposes nothing had been done to the ECA - the original act gave the ECA power to study, conduct hearings, and make recommendations and it would still have those very same functions (Hansard, 1972, No. 45:78).

The amendments were in no way intended to be and would not be a form of ministerial veto, according to Mr. Yurko. The permanent Public Advisory Committee on the Environment wrote a letter to Mr. Yurko, pursuant to the resolution passed at its annual meeting in 1972 (see page 222 above). The letter suggested that the new act provided for ministerial veto of ECA activities. Mr. Yurko responded that it was budget necessities, establishing 'environmental priorities' and better coordination of government activities related to the environment which forced the changes in the act (Environment News, 1973, vol. 2 no. 11:9). Furthermore, he felt that negative reactions to the proposed amendments "reflect either the transmission of misinformation or simply a lack of understanding of the realities of the relationship between the Authority and government" (Environment News, 1973, vol. 2, no. 11:11).

The 1972 amendments drastically changed the relationships of the ECA. Before 1972 the agency had the power to call hearings but could only make recommendations, which could be accepted or rejected at the discretion of the cabinet. Placing the ECA under more direct control of the D of E did, indeed, strip the ECA of its only power. Now not only were ECA recommendations in a nebulous position, in terms of their influence on policy, but the ECA itself was also in a paradoxical position, in terms of its impartiality. The government through the Environment Minister could now direct the ECA toward certain areas and away from others, through the prescription of ministerial consultation. Transformation of the ECA

through these legislative amendments gave it the appearance of a community or public relations arm of the D of E. It is interesting to note that Mr. Yurko's remarks above suggest that the ECA was not intended to have any power!

Changes in the structure of the ECA continued over several years. Between 1972 and 1977 very little of importance transpired relating to the legislation governing the ECA. In fact, the only noticeable change was the inclusion of section 2(c1) - "'Minister' means the Minister of the Environment" - in 1973. Events of 1977 exploded on the relative calm of the preceding four years.

Bill 74 was introduced by the government in the third session of the eighteenth legislature of Alberta on October 17, 1977. "Early in 1977 it became evident that the orderly conduct of the Authority's activities was being severely hampered by internal organizational and administrative difficulties" (ECA, 1977(c):8). Bill 74 was the government response to those perceived difficulties, and brought about another major change in the ECA and the function it would play in environmental public participation. The new Environment Council Act, chapter 125 of the statutes of Alberta, was the result of the passage of Bill 74.

The Environment Conservation Amendment Act (bill 74) was deemed necessary because there were "a number of serious problems (that)...were affecting the ability (of the ECA) to carry out their work" (Mr. Russell, Hansard, 1977:1595). These problems were apparently recognized by the existing

ECA board who brought their concerns to the minister. Two studies were then undertaken to determine the extent and nature of the problems. Alberta's Public Service Commissioner and a management consultant reviewed the ECA and reported to the minister (Mr. Russell, Hansard, 1977:1595). The verbal report from the public service commissioner and the written report of R. Strong Management Consultants agreed that the organizational and administrative problems of the ECA needed correction. The exact nature of those problems was not made public because of the sensitive nature of their contents. Tabling the reports in the legislature would have caused personal embarrassment to ECA officials and staff. The minister's own words may be more appropriate here:

I'll explain why it's possible that the management consultant's report may be tabled at a later date. The Public Service Commissioner's report was a verbal one, and I think for a very good reason. It was a very personal one dealing with individuals, and not the kind I would have agreed to table in any event...the management consultant's report dealt with a number of positions in the ECA's present administrative staff. Because it's very easy to identify individuals by reading the report...I think a number of existing staff members would certainly be treated unfairly if the report were made public at this time. That's the reason (Mr. Russell, Hansard, 1977:1603-1604).

Organizational and administrative problems required the separation of the administrative and research functions from the public hearings functions (Mr. Russell, Hansard, 1977: 1596). Separating these two functions, although they were intimately interdependent, was accomplished through the Environment Council Act. According to the minister, the new

act contained "essentially three changes: a change in name; secondly, a change in the method of appointing the membership; and thirdly, a delineation or clarification as to exactly what the functions of the ECA will be" (Mr. Russell, Hansard, 1977:1596).

The ECA was re-named the Environment Council of Alberta to reflect its advisory role. To call the ECA an authority was a misnomer since it was never an authority in either an expertise or in a legislative sense. Second, a chief executive officer (CEO) was the only permanent member with boards being appointed for hearings on an ad hoc basis. Finally, and most important, the public hearings function was to be formalized in an effort to clarify the ECA's role. In practise, it was argued, the ECA would remain the ECA.

Three very important changes occurred with the passage of the Environment Council Act. The new act did, of course, embody several legislative changes. Many of the changes were not consequential, dealing with rules for quorum, the name change, the procedure for setting up a panel, budget matters, and so on. Two of the changes, relevant to the present discussion, dealt with functions of the council and the CEO. The third change pertained to information released by the council and is discussed later.

Final transformation of the ECA into a departmental branch occurred, again, with the change of a few words. Section 7(1)(b) of the act had been changed once already, as has been indicated earlier. This particular section defined the functions

of the council, and the few words replaced here overshadow any other amendments. The original ECA act gave the authority the right to call hearings into matters according to its own discretion. Bill 42, in 1972, added the 'rider' that hearings required prior 'consultation' with the minister. Section 7(1)(b) of the Environment Council Act read as follows:

The council...shall, upon being requested to do so by the Minister, investigate any matter pertaining to environment conservation specified in the request and make its report to the Minister (emphasis added).

Now, the council could only call hearing upon being ordered to by the Minister of the Environment, indeed a major change.

The second significant change was administrative. Instead of a four-member permanent board, the council would have a permanent chief executive officer and ad hoc hearings panels appointed by the cabinet. Section 4 of the act also specified that the minister could appoint a staff member a CEO. The CEO was a member and vice-chairman of all panels appointed (section 4(4)). Further control of the ECA passed into the hands of the Minister of the Environment under the other sections dealing with the CEO.

For an act which was to have little practical effect the legislative changes were rather grave. The ECA's power had been totally erased in a period of seven years. For a body that never had any authority, according to the government, the changes appear puzzling - a lot went into doing nothing. If the ECA was plagued only with some unknown personnel problems, the extent of the legislative changes appear entirely unnecessary.

A detailed examination of the rationale behind the changes is not critical to the discussion here. What is important is to showcase the evolution of the structural changes in Alberta's grand experiment into environmental public participation. Over seven years and three major pieces of legislation, the ECA had all its teeth pulled.

The evolution of the legislative mandate indicates quite clearly the lack of any power in the hands of this public participation mechanism. The relationship between the ECA and the decision-making authority was one of ever-increasing domination. In its final form, the ECA appears more like a public 'punching bag' than a vehicle for any meaningful public participation. Comments by members in the house will serve to shore up these observations about the ECA and the structure of the Red Deer public participation.

An examination of the debates regarding the ECA changes leaves no doubt as to the minimal role the ECA, and therefore public participation, was to play in public decision-making in general and at Red Deer specifically. Most of the government defence of the changes in the ECA hinged upon an argument against "government by commission, government by authority, or whatever they want to call it" (Mr. Trynchy, Hansard, 1977:1582). Mr. Trynchy continued, "we were elected to make decisions". The government argued that the ultimate responsibility for decisions must remain in the hands of elected members for only they are accountable. An autonomous crown agency is accountable to no one and therefore should have

no control over public decisions (Hansard, 1977:1583).

In the above arguments the government is actually challenging the right of public participants to have some control over the decision process they are being asked to take part in.⁴ If the ECA does represent the view of public participants, it is accountable at least to those who take part in a participation programme. The discussions and debate, indicated above, are aimed specifically at a particular organization. However, it is the principle underlying the existence of that body that is being debated. That principle is the extent to which the public are to be involved in public decision-making.

The government, in the debate and other comments, has indicated that in their view the public should be involved only to a very minimal degree. Coupled with the actual legislation passed by that very same government, it is quite clear that the Red Deer public was not intended to, and did not, have a voice in the dam decision. These pieces of evidence quite clearly support the hypothesis concerning the structural relationships at Red Deer. The outcomes/desires comparison showed that the Red Deer public did not have any influence over the ultimate decision: examination of the relationship of the participation mechanism to the decision-makers begins to indicate why there was no public impact. The hostility of the Red Deer basin residents is, now, not surprising and it begins to appear safe to argue that the hostility was not the result of personal deficiencies.

The Red Deer River Public Advisory Committee

A public advisory committee (PAC) was established to deal specifically with the river problems at Red Deer.⁵ This PAC constituted the second instrument through which public participation into the Red Deer River flow regulation question was to take place. Formation of PAC was discussed in Chapter Three and its impact upon the decision was discussed in the initial section of this chapter. Whereas the relationship between the ECA and the cabinet was quite clear, the relationship PAC was to have on the ultimate decision was rather unclear. In both cases, though, the impact was minimal.

One important source of data here is part of one of the flow regulation studies. Gill and Murri (1975) were commissioned by the D of E to study the sociological implications of the flow regulation proposal. Part of the terms of reference for their study included an evaluation of the public participation to that point in the decision process (Gill and Murri, 1975:143).

As stated in Chapter Three, the PAC was appointed by the minister from individuals nominated by local government bodies and special interest groups in the river basin. Although it should be noted that at least two of the PAC members lived some distance outside the river basin and that none of the families directly affected by the proposal were represented on PAC (Gill and Murri, 1975:143). The function

of PAC, also described in Chapter Three, was two-fold: 1. to provide public input into the studies, and 2. to transmit information to basin residents as the study process evolved. PAC appears to have failed miserably on both counts. The information aspects of PAC are discussed later. For now, the focus is on the structure of the committee and its relationship to the decision-making authority.

A perusal of the study group organization (see Appendix B) shows that PAC had only recommending and informational powers. PAC's recommending function corresponds to the first function denoted above. Apparently PAC was to have some voice in the direction taken by the technical studies. The extent to which PAC actually influenced the planning studies is highly problematic for four reasons. First and foremost, it had no, and was not intended to have any, means of enforcing its views during the study stages, as will be seen below.

Secondly, a major recommendation of PAC, given the results of the Red Deer experience, was ignored. As noted earlier in this chapter, PAC recommended from the beginning that site 11 be included in the feasibility studies. The minister, for rather weak reasons, chose to ignore PAC's advice and ordered that emphasis focus on only sites 6 and 7. The words of Mr. Les Edgar, councilman for the County of Red Deer and a member of PAC, describes the event regarding PAC and site 11:

Now I was appointed on the Public Advisory Committee from its inception until the time that Mr. Rhodes came onto Council. The Council of the County of Red Deer goes along with the philosophy of augmented flow of the Red Deer River. We recommended that a site be chosen above Sundre. Now at the next meeting of the Advisory Committee, I moved a resolution to the effect, and it was carried. There was a vote taken on this, and it was carried.

The next thing we knew, Mr. Yurko announced in the legislature that they had decided that site 7 would be given the in-depth study; and the reasoning there was that if site 6 was determined to be a better site, that they would... the studies were about equal so they wouldn't have lost the time.

Now I took Mr. Yurko to task on this the next time I saw him. We had no consultation with the Advisory Committee. We were not aware of this; and we were told at that time that it was not feasible to have a site upstream from Sundre. There was not sufficient water to give the reservoir...to do what they wanted to do in the line of regulated flow. Also the cost was prohibitive (Proceedings, 1975(III):251; emphasis added).

These observations were confirmed by Mr. Bailey, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Environment. Mr. Bailey stated that after an office-type preliminary assessment, sites 6 and 7 were given priority. PAC then recommended site 11 for intensive study. D of E staff recognized that "we didn't have a great deal of knowledge on Damsite 11...however, as I say the decision was not ours to make, really it came from our superior (the Minister) who made it clear that it was site 7 that he thought should be investigated initially and that later as you well know we included site 6" (Mr. R. Bailey, Proceedings, 1975(III):256; emphasis added).

Through these comments it becomes abundantly clear that PAC's contribution to the studies was inconsequential.

The major recommendation of the supposed public input was totally ignored. Mr. Yurko's rationale for eliminating site 11, that the storage capacity was too low and that the cost was too high, was based either on information that his staff was not aware of or upon no information at all. In fact, the storage capacity of site 11 was larger than either of sites 6 and 7 - 300,000 acre feet compared to 147,000 and 136,000 acre feet respectively (ECA, 1975:plates 6, 7, and 9). Although at the time that the storage capacity information was known no cost estimates had been made. The point here is that despite the low level of knowledge concerning potential damsites and, more importantly, the PAC recommendation, the minister took it upon himself to ignore the public's only voice at that time. Given the structure of the study organization and PAC's position in it, PAC had no way of adding any weight to its view. Public pressure, for example, did not appear to sway the minister to take the PAC suggestion seriously. A near capacity crowd at a dam forum held at Red Deer College endorsed the PAC recommendation but obviously to no avail (Red Deer Advocate, 5 December 1973:3).

The third point bears on PAC's relationship to the study sub-committees (see Appendix B for list of sub-committees). Each sub-committee had one particular technical study to oversee and coordinate. Only two members of PAC were among the 60 sub-committee members (i.e. 3.3%). This lack of PAC representation suggests the subordinate position of public input to the studies. Given the 'day-to-day' influence of the sub-

committees, the PAC position is even more low key.

Mr. Bailey, at the Spruce View hearings, described the process of developing the reports (Proceedings, 1975(III): 257-259). That process can be summarized as follows:

- (1) a report from each study consultant went to its respective sub-committee;
- (2) after approval by the sub-committee (who looked at technical quality), reports went to PAC;
- (3) after PAC reviewed a report it went to the Management Committee for final review and ratification;
- (4) after that it went to the minister for his approval to release to the public.

Two further points need to be raised here. First, only two of the twelve Management Committee members were from PAC. The Management Committee had the final authority over reports released to the minister. Secondly, PAC was told not to release any of the study information they received until that information had been approved by the Management Committee and the minister (Mr. H. Rhodes, Proceedings, 1975(III):252). These observations regarding the structure of the relationships which PAC was confined within point out the lack of any effective influence or authority by PAC - which, to this point in the planning process, was the only public participation.

As part of their study Gill and Murri mailed questionnaires to all 24 PAC members. The questionnaire was designed to gather data with which to analyze the public participation process with a view to further improvements. The consultants also attended one PAC meeting to gather additional information. Results of their research was contradictory but does affirm

conclusions reached above. A majority (17 of 24) of PAC members seemed to understand their role but only 2 of 17 were satisfied with the activities of PAC (Gill and Murri, 1975:145). The major reason for dissatisfaction "was a lack of understanding of the role and function of the Public Advisory Committee, its status, and their individual roles and perspectives as members" (p. 145). This dissatisfaction is not surprising as it appears that PAC was not to do anything in particular except in some ill-defined informational capacity. Furthermore, according to the consultants, the PAC meetings were basically informational in nature - i.e. no decisions were made. From the events described above it would seem that the information received by PAC was simply decisions made by others. Apparently PAC was to then pass that same information on to the residents of the river valley.

From all appearances the role of PAC was a very minimal one - which it was intended to be. PAC had very little impact upon the flow regulation studies even though its functions, as outlined by the D of E, gave it the appearance of the possibility of having some input. This conclusion is further confirmed by remarks of Mr. Al McPhail, flow regulation studies project leader: "the public advisory committee has not been that effective because they haven't had that much information to work with but we will get quite a lot more involvement from these people when summaries...are made and the reports are evaluated" (Red Deer Advocate, 23 April 1975:1; emphasis added). He made these comments at a date

when all the studies had already been completed, according to the progress chart contained in the main report (Alberta Environment, 1975:172). In other words, the main task of PAC was to come into play after the studies were completed, not during or before the actual research process⁶.

This last point brings us to the question of the point at which public participation was to enter the planning process. Although no documentation exists describing the planning process used by the D of E, the place that public participation was to have, in a temporal sense, can nonetheless be determined. PAC appears to not have been operable until the later stages of the decision-making process. PAC had very little influence on the direction and content of the studies and had no way of enforcing any of its views. The public hearings occurred even later in the process, after hundreds of thousands of dollars had already been spent and the preferred course of action had been specified⁷. This situation suggests that the government did not deem it necessary to engage public participants until after the process was well under way. In terms of the planning stages described in Chapter Two (page 34), public participation at Red Deer occurred in the last stage of the process - the choice of the preferred mode of action.

Public participation occurring late in the planning process placed public participation in a rather precarious position. By the time the process has reached its final stages

a sort of "planning rigor mortis" can set in. To have expended large amounts of time and resources in the initial stages makes it extremely difficult for the desires of public participants to drastically alter impending outcomes. That the Red Deer decision process was inflexible is more than obvious, as is indicated by what has been presented to this point. Many of the participants themselves were cognizant of the problems of later-stage public participation. An excellent example of this concern was expressed by Mr. Mercier at the hearings in Red Deer:

I feel that there should have been more citizen groups involved in (the) decision-making process long before this - not at the end of the reports which the taxpayer is paying for and which we have no control over...How can we be expected to make competent decisions based on this type of information which hasn't allowed for any meaningful large scale involvement until recently? (Proceedings, 1975(VI):229-230).

A second problem which occurs in late-stage participation is what Barry Sadler - an ECA officer - referred to as "a means/ends confusion" (personal interview, March 19, 1979). Public discussion of the alternative locations for a dam is a discussion of a means to an end rather than the ends themselves. A dam is only one avenue, among many, for achieving some desired end-state. In the case at hand, a massive industrial program was seen, at least by the government, as dependent upon the construction of a dam on the river. The desired end-state implied by these assertions is best described by the term 'ALPEC' - Alberta Petrochemical Complex (Red Deer Advocate, 23 September 1975:1). The point is that it was ALPEC, or at

least alternative water management options, which was the real issue at stake. As Mr. Leigh Noton, of the Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists, noted: the issue of dams "are part of the broader issue of industrial development about which there have been no comprehensive studies or public debate...therefore since there has been essentially no public input or debate on such development, we feel it should be a first priority that this should be the main issue before us, as opposed to the present dam proposals" (Proceedings, 1975 (VI):24-26).

Given the structural problems identified to this point, the ECA and PAC lack of effective voice and late-stage participation, the public is left only with trusting the decision-makers. Since the structural difficulties did not allow the public any means of enforcing any of its views they could only hope that those making the decisions would take their desires, interests, and opinions into account. A resource planner working for the government has, for example, expressed just that sentiment: keeping the public informed throughout "every stage of every proposal (would make) the planning process... 'unworkable'" (Edmonton Journal, 3 November 1978:B6). The point is that it may be very difficult for the public to trust a process which does not heed any of their desires. Gill and Murri (1975:144) found a pervasive mistrust amongst those people they interviewed during their study. In examining the large amount of material related to the Red Deer River dam, an impression that a great many people

had a genuine distrust of the government was unavoidable.

Remarks by a Red Deer participant illustrate the point well:

The issue I feel, is not that (the public) lacks intelligence or doesn't want to hear what you are saying, or that your communication is poor. It reflects, I feel, a distrust in the government's decision-making ability or the thinking that the government has, by and large, already made its decision and these hearings are mainly a public relations pacifier.

I liken the relationship to that between individuals or a teacher and a class or a doctor and a client, the government must earn the respect of the people. No longer is a position of authority or knowledge sufficient to earn respect in itself (Mr. H. Brink, Proceedings, 1977(V):43).

Similarly, a high school student from the area, Tim Minty, carried out a survey in the Spruce View/Dickson area. One question asked was: "Do you think the dam will be built regardless of local public opinion?" The response was as follows: "Sixty-seven percent said yes: No matter what we say, the Government will put it where they want" (Proceedings, 1975(V):210). The government could not, and should not, expect the public to blindly trust their every move when experience, both at Red Deer and elsewhere, violates that trust.

Content Analysis

This brings us to the final piece of evidence to be presented in this section of conflict theory analysis. As indicated in Chapter Four, a category labelled 'trust' was included in the content analysis. The rationale behind the category emerged primarily from two sources: (1) an impression

of public distrust gleaned from the other case materials, as indicated above, and (2) a major piece of research done, curiously enough, within the elitist tradition (see Chapter Two, p. 70).

It appears quite logical to argue, and research has shown, that those who benefit from or are able to influence public decision-making do trust existing political arrangements. A logical extension, then, is that those who are in fact powerless will feel powerless. Powerlessness was then operationalized in the content analysis as distrust in the government.

Conflict theory predicts that those who opposed the government plan would more likely express distrust than would those in favor of the official plan. The null hypothesis is that there is no difference between supporters and opponents in terms of their trust/distrust of the government. On the basis of table 6-1 the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 6-1

Percentage of supporters and opponents
who trust/distrust the government

	Trust	
	yes	no
support	5 100%	0 0%
oppose	2 3.1%	62 96.9%

chi-square = 37.70964
significance = .000
phi = .83184

The large number of missing observations (189) severely limits the weight of the findings here if taken in isolation. The high level of association ($\phi = .83184$) could very well be a direct result of the cases not coded. Taken in concert with the data presented throughout the rest of this chapter, the results of the content analysis attests to the abundant support already found for the conflict hypothesis. Public participants, especially opponents, did not trust the government to take account of their interests, needs, and desires. The main participation vehicles were structurally powerless. The fact that participants felt powerless (i.e. did not trust the government) can only add empirical weight to the hypothesized situation.

Summary

The intent of this chapter was to present data, gleaned from several sources, concerning the structural relationships relevant to an analysis of the Red Deer situation. The data required emerged from the first of three general hypotheses contained in the conflict approach. Although analytically separable from other hypotheses, the one related to structural relationships is intimately intertwined with the others, as will become more obvious as the analysis continues. An attempt was made to flesh out the basic relationships involved in this initial section.

The data gathered do provide substantial empirical

support for the conflict hypothesis. Lack of public impact is first explainable in the structure of the public participation programme. The mandates for both the ECA and PAC were such that they were placed in a very subordinate position. Any recommendations of either of these participation mechanisms were subject to the whims of the decision-making authority. Public participants had no assurances that their desires or interests would be included in the final decision. The vehicles used for public input had absolutely no way of ensuring that their suggestions would mean anything - as it turned out they did not. Soliciting public input at the last stage of the planning process only compounded the problem. As the process proceeds to succeeding stages it could be argued that inflexibility and rigidity set in at increasing rates. To change the goals or to examine other action modes after the initial stages have already indicated the probable outcome is extremely difficult. Again, public desires become ignored which, not surprisingly, leads to hostile public reactions. In addition, the content analysis showed that the public were well aware of their powerless position. The public, in effect, did not share in the decision which was made - the decision was made for them not with them!

As such, the public participation programme appears more like a public relations attempt than any endeavor to account for public desires. The public was allowed to "let off steam" in the Red Deer programme but had no means of ensuring their voice would be heard - the public participation

programme was intended to be a "pacifier" as Mr. Brinks (see page 239 above) noted. Most important here is that it is not simply the fact that the public did not have impact on the final decision, but that the structure of the program is consistent with that lack of impact. To expect the public to join a process that they cannot influence, except at the whims of the experts, is to invite hostility and points to the 'persuading' role to which the public participation programme appears to be intended. Thus, the hostility experienced at Red Deer begins to be explainable in structural - not personal - terms. Chapter Seven undertakes to further explicate the 'public relations nature' of the Red Deer River public participation experience.

Notes

1. These hypotheses are presented as analytically separate. The reality of the course of events at Red Deer is, of course, a unified whole. That these hypotheses are inter-related will become clear as the discussions progress. Analytical separation eases presentation of theoretical and empirical discussions.
2. It is interesting to note that the ERCB's mandate does not include examination of environmental and social impacts of resource development projects. This point is taken up in subsequent discussion.
3. The following list of ECA hearings show the range of topics covered by the ECA hearings:
 - (1) a proposal to restore the water levels in Cooking and Hasting Lakes, 1971;
 - (2) the impact on the environment of surface mining in Alberta, 1972;
 - (3) the conservation of historical and archaeological resources in Alberta, 1972;
 - (4) the environmental effects of the operation of sulphur extraction gas plants in Alberta, 1972;

- (5) land use and resource development in the eastern slopes, 1972;
 - (6) the restoration of water levels in the Peace-Athabaska delta, 1973;
 - (7) the use of herbicides and pesticides in Alberta, 1974-75;
 - (8) water management and flood control in the Paddle River basin, 1975;
 - (9) the environmental effects of residential development in the Leduc/International airport area, 1975;
 - (10) flow regulation of the Red Deer River, 1975 and 1977;
 - (11) erosion of land in northwestern Alberta, 1976.
4. Whether the intent of the remarks referred to is congruent with the effect of those remarks is not relevant here. the ECA was designed as a public participation vehicle, regarding environmental and resource decisions, and remains so in its intent. Challenging the right of the ECA to have some power in decision-making, then, in effect challenges the right of public participation to have any power.
 5. To avoid confusion it should be noted that two distinct public advisory committees are referred to in this thesis. The PAC being discussed at present is one which was organized specifically for the Red Deer River decision, on an ad hoc basis. The other PAC, referred to in the discussion of ECA legislation, is a permanent provincial committee.
 6. An excellent example of the total ineffectiveness of PAC transpired at the hearings at Drumheller. Mr. C.L. Swain, of the Drumheller Chamber of Commerce, was a member of PAC. Mr. Swain "was unaware of this meeting being held until I was enjoying my coffee at the coffee counter and my counterpart on the committee told me I have an appointment...I asked him where, so here I am" (Proceedings, 1975 (IV):32).
 7. Granted a second round of studies took place after the phase one hearings, but the effect of the phase one hearings on the second set of studies appears minimal. More is said in this regard later.

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Chapter 7

The Public Relations Programme - Conflict Theory II

The main implication of the second of the conflict hypotheses, the 'public relations' hypothesis, is that the decision was made before the public became involved to any substantial extent. This implication follows quite logically from what was discovered in the first phase of analysis above. If the decision-making authority had made the decision for the people, then it would have to convince them that the decision made was the right one. Evidence gathered under the 'public relations' hypothesis fell into and will be discussed under five categories: (1) events before 1973, (2) the goals (or the real issue), (3) the flow regulation studies, (4) public information, and (5) the 'dam' timing. Again, several sources and collection techniques were utilized - historical material, case sources, and the content analysis.

Before 1973

Several events, important to the Red Deer River dam decision and this study, occurred before the announcement, in 1973, that the river and its problems would be studied. The Red Deer River has been the subject of concern and of many 'wild' schemes since the turn of the century (Alberta Environment, 1975(a):1). All kinds of strategies have been devised to deal with the flow problems of the river, ranging from the feasible to the outrageous. One such proposal, known as 'Cook's scheme', saw diversion of water from the North Saskatchewan to the Red Deer with further diversion from the Red Deer to the valleys and plains of east-central Alberta. Cook's scheme was never implemented. Another as early as "1897 (in which) William Pearce envisioned a scheme whereby water could be diverted from the North Saskatchewan to the Red Deer River for agricultural purposes", met a fate similar to Cook's (Mr. R. Bailey; Proceedings, 1975(I):5).

In 1935 the Red Deer River came under more intensive study again. A group of scientists were assembled under the auspices of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act (PFRA) (SAC, 1975:1). As before, the low flow characteristics of the river were of primary concern. The PFRA group determined that a dam could alleviate the river's flow problem. Because of economic slump of the 1930's the plan was rendered infeasible.

In 1965 the PFRA group was reorganized as the Saskatchewan-Nelson Basin Board (SNBB). The SNBB was the joint effort of

the governments of Canada, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. In October of 1967 the SNBB was instructed to carry out a major study to determine an integrated development plan for the Saskatchewan-Nelson River basin. Specifically, the objective of the research was:

To study the water resources of the Saskatchewan-Nelson basin, including the potential additional supply by diversion or storage. In making this study, consideration will be given to the feasibility and cost of the many combinations of storage and/or diversion works needed to provide a firm water supply of varying amounts and with varying seasonal distributions, at various selected points along the river system (SNBB, 1972:21).

Indeed an ambitious research project. A budget of \$4.8 million and a time frame of five years appeared to be consistent with the immense scope implied in the terms of reference.

The study looked at 55 dams and 23 diversion projects. Most of the work, in fact almost all, focused on engineering feasibility reports. Little attempt was made to estimate the economic, social, or environmental impacts of the various projects (SNBB, 1972:25).

Two schemes regarding the Red Deer River were investigated - a dam at the confluence of the Raven and Red Deer Rivers (site 7), and a diversion project from the North Saskatchewan to the Red Deer (p. 26). Four conclusions of the study are of importance to the present discussions:

- (1) eight new reservoirs in the basin could increase the delivered flow by about 15%, one of which was the Raven dam;
- (2) no investigation of damsites in the upper reaches of the Red Deer River had been

- undertaken - the only known sites had high cost-to-storage capacity ratios although sites worthy of investigation could very well exist;
 - (3) cursory examination of environmental and other costs, not including social and economic costs, revealed only large gaps in knowledge;
 - (4) the cost and flow figures were merely illustrative, not definitive.
- (pp. 25-41)

As can be seen above, over a period of approximately fifty years momentum for the construction of a dam built up. Over that fifty years, the various governments of Alberta more or less endorsed the idea of damming the Red Deer River.

In the meantime, the city of Red Deer was also getting into the act. The city over a number of years applied pressure upon the provincial government for some action in alleviating the river's flow problems. The low flow characteristics of the river had, over the years, caused problems with the city's municipal water withdrawal. Especially in the winter months, the river's flow periodically became extremely low causing problems with the city's withdrawal equipment. According to Roy McGregor, former mayor of Red Deer, city councils had for years urged the government to implement some sort of flow control (Red Deer Advocate, 7 November 1975:4). Mr. McGregor claimed that the various city councils had requested the provincial government to provide assistance, and believed flow control was necessary for an assured water supply if Red Deer was to grow, even at 'normal' rates (Proceedings, 1975 (V():16). Red Deer city councils added 'fuel to the fire' - aimed at bringing the river under man-made control.

Thus, it can be seen quite clearly that there was an historical trend towards the necessity of damming the river. Few other alternatives were seriously considered. The SNBB did, however, consider a diversion project from the North Saskatchewan (SNBB, 1972:26). A discussion of potential groundwater supplies was included in the SNBB report, only to the extent of noting that a sizable body of knowledge of the quantity and quality of bedrock and till aquifers was available; and that groundwater was used to about 1% of potential yields (SNBB, 1972:38). Major emphasis was on the use of dams and reservoirs as solutions to the river problems.

The Goals (or the real issue)

Another impetus for damming the river came with the election of a Progressive Conservative government in Alberta. Not long after their election the new government announced its dual growth policies - rapid industrialization and decentralization of industrial growth (Mr. Lougheed; Hansard, 1972:No.1, p. 8; Speeches, 1974:224-227). Achieving the goals implied in these policies were seen as entirely dependent upon controlling the flow of the Red Deer River, according to a statement by the minister to a meeting of PAC (Red Deer Advocate, 7 december 1973:1). Was this goal one which had been negotiated with the people in the basin or was it one which was being imposed upon the river valley? Available information points to the latter.

Officially a dam on the river was to be a multi-purpose structure. Mr. McPhail, study project leader, told those attending the very first hearing that "the purpose of the reservoir is to guarantee water supply, improve water quality, improve fish habitat, enhance recreation facilities, provide some erosion and flood control, provide some power production" (Proceedings, 1975(I):16). These objectives more or less outline the basic problems in the river - flow fluctuation, low dissolved oxygen content, erosion, and floods. All of these problems were recognized by those who lived near the river. The ECA opinion polls bear out this contention (ECA, 1976(a):9; 1977:38); with supply problems outdistancing all others in terms of perceived seriousness. There can be no doubt that an overwhelming majority of people in the basin wanted to see these problems rectified. But, as was pointed out earlier (see Chapter Five, pages 186-188), most did not believe a dam was necessary. In fact, a dam is a rather poor way of alleviating any but water supply problems. Bank erosions and floods can only be controlled for a few miles downstream from a dam (some of the worst floods and erosion occurred above the proposed dams or in the far-eastern reaches of the river), a dam actually provides for increased dilution of pollutants rather than solving any water quality (dissolved oxygen content) problems (Muzik and Card, 1975: 103-106; Blench, 1975:703-705; Alberta Environment, 1975(b):333-335). These particular problems usually do, and in this case did, require facilities in addition to a dam. In fact, the main report produced by the

D of E bears out these observations.

The primary objective of the proposal to regulate the Red Deer River would be to increase low winter flows in the river and thus increase the firm water supplies and make the central Alberta region more attractive for future industrial expansion. Secondary objectives would include the creation of a reservoir with recreational potential, provision of some measure of flood and erosion control, improvement of water quality in the winter season, and the enhancement of the river habitat for sport fish (Alberta Environment, 1975(a):2-3; emphasis added).

Subsequently, the dam was deemed necessary because of its perceived, intimate relationship to the massive industrial agenda proposed by the government for central Alberta. Mr. Bailey confirmed this dam-industrial communion:

In announcing the commencement of (the) studies, Mr. Yurko said that a dam is essential to the government's long term program of decentralization of industry. A petro-chemical industry, for example, would be impossible in the Red Deer area without adequate year round water supply. And so it was on this basis, this principle, that the Minister directed these studies to be undertaken (Proceedings, 1975 (V):6-7).

The dam-industrial interconnection was contained in the preamble to almost every study, report and news release concerned with the Red Deer River dam; for example:

It is one of the aims of the government of Alberta to stimulate the economic growth of the smaller urban centers. To that end, it is government policy to encourage decentralization of future industrial and population growth. It is recognized in this context that there are some areas where inadequate water supplies of suitable quality would inhibit development to full potential. Any physically and economically feasible proposal which would minimize the water problem as a limiting factor in such

areas is of interest in the furtherance of government policy and benefits to all Albertans (Alberta Environment, 1975(a):1; emphasis added).

Water supply, as it existed, was more than adequate to meet municipal, industrial, agricultural, and other purposes except the grandiose industrial vision of the government of Alberta. That the goals embodied in government policy were imposed is corroborated by evidence from several sources.

First, speeches and statements by government officials over the length of the drama bespeak of a foregone conclusion. A speech by Mr. Yurko, quoted earlier, indicated that flow control was absolutely necessary for future industrial water demands. This statement was made in 1973 before any substantial study or public input had taken place. At that time the minister told a meeting of PAC that a dam was "essential for the expansion of heavy industry in central Alberta" (Red Deer Advocate, 7 December 1973:1). Mr. McPhail, the study group leader, told a group of Red Deer residents that "the prime purpose of the studies is to assure that we have water for industrial expansion in the area" (Red Deer Advocate, 23 April 1975:1).

The government was so committed to its development scheme that on September 19, 1975 the Minister of Business Development and Tourism wrote an 'assuring' letter to four companies involved in ALPEC (see Appendix E). This letter contained, among other things, the following passage:

The Government will ensure that there is available within a reasonable distance from Government approved sites an adequate water

supply for the projects described in this letter but the Government will not be responsible for the cost of transporting the water to any plant site.

This letter was written long before the public hearings which were to discuss the damming of the river. Obviously the government had already determined that the river's flow would be regulated - and the only regulation possibility deemed feasible was a dam! Incidentally, this letter was also written before ERCB and cabinet approval of resource project applications by the companies involved.

The necessity of a dam was advocated over the whole period of the Red Deer affair. Even after the first set of hearings the government was, apparently, still convinced that the river would be dammed. In his speech from the throne, opening the third session of the eighteenth legislature in May of 1977 (before the second hearings), the premier referred to flow regulation of the river as a 'fait accompli'. He indicated that the flow regulation system in the river was long overdue and that planning for its implementation would begin as soon as the public hearings were completed (Mr. Lougheed, Hansard, 1977:4).

Secondly, of the four specific terms of reference given to the ECA only one referred to "the rationale for, and necessity of, regulating the flow of the Red Deer River" (ECA, 1975(a):3). Basic to the request to the ECA was an assessment of the two selected locations for a dam in terms of "the flow regulation priorities determined for the Red

Deer River" (p. 3). Implied in the terms of reference for the hearings, and borne out by the planning studies undertaken, was that any recommendations emerging from the hearings were to **determine** the public preference between the two government selected damsites. Furthermore, choice between damsites intimates that the ends which a dam will supposedly ensure were already decided upon, namely, massive industrial development. The fact that the premier would state publicly that the government is committed to a dam and that the only question to be settled at the hearings was where, affirms that the goals were pre-determined and non-negotiable (Red Deer Advocate, 14 March 1975:4).

During the hearings there was a consistent and insistent complaint that the hearings were not engaging public debate on the 'real issue' involved. Many of those participating were well aware that a dam was only a means to a particular end. Other river problems could be handled very well by facilities other than a dam, except a large-scale industrialization program. It was the end or goal of rapid and prodigious industrial development which many wanted to see debated in full public view. Examples from each set of hearings are illustrative here:

It is my hope that the public hearings are only the beginning of research that needs to be done on whether the Red Deer River needs flow control (Mr. R. Mills; Proceedings, 1975(VI):199);

The consideration of the utility of a particular version of industrialization offered for the Red Deer City area...ought...to be given a full

set of public hearings as well (Mr. K. Larsen; Proceedings, 1975(III):111);

Finally, I have a comment to make about the implications of these proceedings. I feel that these hearings are obscuring a much more important issue, the potential harmful effects of petrochemical and thermal electric industrialization...the government should be as open in discussing this question, the question of petrochemical and thermal electric industrialization and its effects on people and on the environment, as people have already been discussing for the lesser question of the dam on this river (Mr. M. Fox; Proceedings, 1977(IV): 229).

Industrial growth and decentralization were goals of the government of Alberta, but whether or not the people of the Red Deer River basin were as equally enthusiastic is problematic. Creating a world-scale petrochemical complex and a large coal-related industrial structure was an overriding objective of the government. Findings reported in Chapter Five (pp 183-6) show quite conclusively that the people of the valley did not want a massive industrial complex built in the area. Both the content analysis and the ECA and RDRPC surveys agreed on that conclusion.

The most important point here is that there was not any public debate or participation regarding the goals toward which the planning effort was aimed. The government was promoting a program of industrial development that few people in the basin wanted - the vision was being imposed. The fact that the government equated damming the river with growth implies that the decision was pre-determined. The hearings did not address the underlying rationale for damming the

river, only where the dam should be built. As will be seen below, the extensive feasibility studies played an important role in the attempted public relations program at Red Deer.

The Studies

As indicated in Chapter Three, the government, through the Environmental Planning Division of the D of E, spent almost \$400,000 on a series of technical studies in 1974-75. Upon receiving the preliminary recommendations from the ECA, the D of E commissioned three more studies in 1976 costing approximately \$180,000 (Hansard, 1977:116). All of the D of E studies, plus several other documents from the ECA, were released to the public prior to the public hearings. It is those studies which are the subject of the present discussion. What follows will attempt to show that the technical studies were not 'value-free', scientific investigations but were extremely biased. The studies and their conclusions were so biased toward the policy of decentralized and massive industrialization that one participant commented: "one began those reports with the feeling that many of the issues were being critically examined, but ended with the feeling of having been exposed to a used car salesman's pitch" (Mr. M. O'Brien; Proceedings, 1975(V):184; emphasis added).

Given that the goals guiding the planning exercise were pre-determined, it is of little surprise that the technical studies merely substantiated the choice of goals. One

finds an initial indication of the outcome of the studies in the objectives of the government department, the D of E, which directed the study process. "As a policy-formation department, support was given to decentralization of industry through department programs of land assembly, establishment of the energy corridor, reviewing and aiding the selection of petrochemical sites, etc." (Alberta Environment, 1974:3). Technical feasibility studies, information to be used by the public in making its decision, were carried out under supervision of the D of E. The policy statement by the D of E indicates an obvious and direct bias in those studies in the first place - industrialization must be facilitated and water must not be a limiting factor in the implementation of the industrial agenda.

Moreover, general terms of reference for the studies indicate a further bias. Enough that the goals were taken for granted but many potential water management schemes were removed from consideration. That alternatives were removed from public scrutiny has already been shown in the minister's decision to exclude site 11 from study. Not only was the public excluded from determining the objectives of the plan but they also had very little knowledge of alternatives, other than damsites 6 and 7, on which to make a decision. The vast amount of information released to the public, seven volumes from the D of E (approximately 1800 pages) plus nine other information bulletins from the ECA, provided very little comparative information.

Originally twelve damsites were identified on the Red Deer River. As indicated earlier, these damsites were subjected to a preliminary office-type examination. That cursory investigation resulted in sites 6 and 7 being chosen for further study, although the minister's own preferences appeared to play a large part in the determination of damsites for extensive study. Considerable information already existed on site 7 (the Raven site) from the SNBB studies of the 60's and 70's.

A similar cursory examination of other alternatives was done. Of the approximately 2000 pages of information produced, discussion of alternatives to a dam took up about 100 pages. Most of that 100 pages came from study undertaken after the 1975 hearings. Only 4 pages of the initial studies was devoted to examination of options other than a dam. That 4 pages contained the following preamble:

When investigations were instigated, it was recognized that none of the suggested alternatives would provide the same overall mix of benefits as the proposed single regulating reservoir at Damsite No. 6 or Damsite No. 7 (Alberta Environment, 1975(a):47; emphasis added).

These investigations resulted in some preliminary cost estimates of very limited comparative use (Alberta Environment, 1975(a):47). Comparison of potential damsites comprised 12 pages of the ECA (1975(b)) information bulletin #3. Total investment, storage capacity, and acres flooded constituted the basis of comparison, combined with the most prefatory examination of other relevant facts.

Terms of reference for the detailed studies of sites 6 and 7 were provided on October 30, 1973 (ECA, 1975(b):2). General terms of reference as a whole were aimed at determining which of the two damsites was the most suitable and how detrimental impacts could be minimized (see Appendix C for terms of reference). Absolutely no mention is made of critical evaluation of various ways in which river problems, including forecasted supply problems, could be met.

The ECA preliminary report, which emerged from the first set of hearings, determined that other damsites (specifically site 11) and other options should be the subject of further detailed studies (ECA, 1976(b):9-18). The minister so instructed the D of E staff. Three further reports (Alberta Environment, 1976(a),(b),(c)) were the result. These new reports investigated eleven damsites upstream from Sundre and twelve combinations of alternatives to a dam, but not to the extent of the original feasibility reports. These 1976 reports only reiterated the necessity of a dam to attract large-scale industry to the basin. Information contained in the 1976 studies still added little in the way of comparative information. As Dr. A.H. Laycock, of the Alberta Geographical society, pointed out:

The most encouraging feature in the discussion and comparison of alternatives is the reduction in promotion of particular choice. The preferences of the Department are still very apparent and a number of the discussions are not free of biases but the presentation of alternatives, especially in the matrix tables 10 and 11 in the alternatives report, is such an improvement

over previous presentations that we can hope for more objective studies and more balanced, integrated planning in the future. Unfortunately, only a few of the alternatives have received adequate study and others have been dismissed or ignored (Proceedings, 1977(IV): 61-62).

Again, the minister must take responsibility for the limited applicability of the 1976 studies. Mr. Melnychuck, a senior planner for the D of E, explained to the ECA the series of events which led to release of the dams site report (Proceedings, 1977(III):134-35). Upon completion of preparatory study a very preliminary cost estimate for site 11 was arrived at. This information was passed on to the minister along with the qualification that much more extensive study was required to produce "a single figure cost estimate for site 11, with the same level of accuracy as we had for site 6" (p. 135). Presumably, arriving at environmental, social, and economic statements would also require much more work. "It was the Minister's decision and his view apparently, that the public would have sufficient information to compare the upstream sites with site 6, and that further expenditures for such detailed analysis, on the basis of indicated costs was not warranted" (p. 135). That indicated cost covered an extremely large range, from \$58.7 to \$94.4 million (Alberta Environment, 1976(a):table 3), compared to an estimate of \$43 million for site 6 (Alberta Environment, 1975(a):97). Still, there was no information with which to make adequate comparison of the various alternatives for solving the problems of the Red Deer River.

Two other observations need to be discussed here: (1) the supposed 'value-freeness' of the technical reports, and (2) the Science Advisory Committee's assessment of the flow regulation proposal. Any 'value-freeness' in the technical scientific studies was comprised by acceptance of assumptions contained in the terms of reference provided. To determine the 'most efficient allocation of resources' within the extremely restricting framework of the government policy is certainly not value-free. All the studies were conducted within the value(s) implied by the government's massive industrial vision - at this point value-free objectivity is lost. That the goal of large-scale industrial development pervades all that was done is well illustrated by the following examples.¹

Two of the studies especially show the biases contained in the technical reports - the water demand and economic assessment. These two studies are especially good examples to use given the major implications they had in the decision - it was the forecasted industrial demand and the benefits of world-scale industrial development which were the basis of the decision to build a dam on the Red Deer River. The municipal and industrial water demand is particularly important because most of the government rationale for building the dam was based on the industrial activity and water demand projections which emerged from that study.

The municipal and industrial water demands study was done by two members of the D of E staff. This study

attempted two things: (1) an inventory of existing water uses and users, and (2) a forecast of future water requirements of the Red Deer River (Seifried and Lefrancois, 1975:5). The document did present existing withdrawals from the river by user - municipal, industrial, and agricultural. It should be noted that determining what water was being used at present, from a reading of the report, was very difficult. Nowhere in the chapter on existing water demand was there, for example, an easy-to-understand table listing users and the demands.

Chapter three of the report outlined projected water demands. "A scenario approach (was) used as it (was) impossible to accurately forecast future (industrial) activity, even with very good data" (Seifried and Lefrancois, 1975: 20; emphasis added). Where industries locate is dependent upon many factors, the most important of which are profitability and product demand. The demand study chose to ignore these two very important variables, focusing instead on two others: "one is the resource base of the area...the other is government policy" (p. 21; emphasis added). A further qualification is added, in that government involvement makes forecasting even more difficult, which appears as a very contradictory statement. On the one hand, government policy and involvement are basic to the projections but at the same time that very policy and involvement make forecasts extremely difficult to make. Because of the great many difficulties the forecasts were not to be "construed as being a definite statement predicting the degree of future (industrial)

activity" (p. 21).

Adding qualifying statements to a forecast is indeed appropriate. The problem here is that absolutely no probabilities were used in calculating either the size or timing of future water demand. Minimum and maximum demands for 1984 and 2004 were calculated using this scenario approach (pp. 23-25). A dam would be needed only if the maximum activity actually took place. One would have expected that a lot more care would have gone into making these forecasts given the extremely weighty implications which emerged therefrom. The whole basis for damming the river rested upon the projected industrial activity and concomitant water demands.

Government policy appears to have been the overriding variable in making the projections - little mention was made of other more important factors which go into making industrial location decisions. The authors of the study recognized the need to consider other variables but that was it. Lack of accessible data seemed to provide the rationale for sweeping other considerations aside. Although an RDRPC study (1969:14-20) showed the gas and coal reserves of the basin to be of relatively small size.

Furthermore, petrochemical industry officials also made numerous public statements to the effect that they did not need a dammed river (see Red Deer Advocate, 10 March 1975 and Edmonton Journal, 15 May 1975, for example). An application by four petrochemical companies for an ERCB permit made no mention of water supply problems (ERCB, 1975). There

is also evidence that industry officials did not believe the area could support world-scale industrial development because of competitive and other economic problems (Edmonton Journal, 13 and 14 May 1976:53 and 94). In any case, the point here is that the forecasts were based upon government policy rather than on other much more important variables. Second, the forecasts did not contain any probability factors given the extremely tenuous nature of the projections. Both these factors demonstrate the total lack of scientific value-freeness in the feasibility study. The studies served to justify a government policy stance rather than provide the public with information with which to make a competent, informed decision regarding the dam proposal.

These apparently exaggerated forecasts, and accompanying rationale, formed the basic assumptions of the economic (cost/benefit) study. From the very start the economic study carried the previous biases into its own investigations. The economic study had, though, problems of its own added to those it inherited from the demands study. Although the study discussed methodological problems, noting that time and financial constraints meant not using important market variables in making an economic assessment (Seastone, 1975:229), it did contain five important difficulties which must be noted.

First, the major benefit of construction of a dam, according to the consultant, was increased industrial growth. The rationale for deeming growth as the main benefit was that it was consistent with government policy (p. 231). The

desired industrialization would aid in the province's attempt to promote growth and relieve dependence upon a non-renewable resource base. Using industrialization as a direct and major economic benefit is entirely inconsistent with water resource cost/benefit analysis, according to both the consultant and his critics.

Moreover, the region's economy was not overly dependent on the extraction of raw, non-renewable resources. An RDRPC (1969) study showed the base of the region's economy was agriculture, as did the consultant's information (pp. 211-219). This economic fact highlights the second and third points to be made here. The economic study took a decidedly provincial, as opposed to regional, point of view. As the report states, "it is the provincial cost of dam construction to which the direct economic benefits will be compared" (p. 230; emphasis added). Admittedly, much of Alberta's economy is based on extraction of raw resources but that is not the case for the river basin. Because of this provincial focus many of the regional costs of a dam were swept aside into a residual category of 'unquantifiable costs' (pp. 282-291). Assuming for the moment that increased industrial activity could be considered the major direct economic benefit, then the costs (increased pressure on agricultural land for non-agricultural uses, need for more municipal services, more pollution, more population, increasing crime, etc.) associated with that development should have been more carefully identified and assessed beyond the 10% added as 'residual costs'.

The most glaring cost excluded from careful analysis constituted the third difficulty in the economic study. Included in the direct cost of constructing a dam was the amount of money required to acquire farmland to be flooded. This cost was set at 'fair market value'. Totally ignored was the value of farm production lost forever. Apparently, lost production is not directly a provincial cost. Also, because land is a renewable resource, and will conceivably last into perpetuity, its discount rate is zero. A discount rate of zero gives lost production an infinite value and in itself is a cost greater than any direct benefit of short-term industrialization. More realistically, the value of crops produced for 10, 15, 20 or 100 years could have been added to the costs. In fact, Myrna Manuel, a farmer's wife, did just that - she produced a cost of lost production which placed the dam at site 6 in a very precarious cost/benefit position (Proceedings, 1977(I):13-15). But, it seems, a highly-trained economic consultant could not produce a similar analysis. The point is not to make a negative comment on the nature of the consultant's expertise, rather that assuming the government's objectives and perspective excluded the cost of lost production from analysis. Acquiring the land to be flooded at 'fair market value' was the only land cost which the government found.

Another aspect which must be noted concerns the dam itself. Nowhere in the analysis were other alternatives considered. The cost/benefit study assumed that a dam would be

built and went on to point out costs and benefits associated with a dam. To be a true cost/benefit analysis, even assuming that industrialization be considered the major economic benefit of flow control, several alternatives for flow regulation must be compared.

Lastly, no probabilities concerning the extreme variation and uncertainty in projected industrial activity were used. Even if a dam was assumed built, even if agricultural cost was underestimated, even if other alternatives were ignored, one would expect that some probability factor would have been used in calculating costs and benefits.²

The above examples were presented for two reasons. First, they show quite clearly that the supposed value-freeness of the scientific studies was almost non-existent. Second, because of the lack of value-freeness much more is added to the claim that the public participation programme, and the planning exercise itself, was a public relations effort rather than an attempt at any kind of consultation.³

The D of E studies were also criticized by the ECA's Science Advisory Committee (SAC). This committee is a group of academic and industrial scientists who are called on by the ECA to evaluate scientific documents. The ECA asked the SAC to assess the D of E feasibility studies. What is most disturbing about the SAC assessment is its overall condemnation of the studies. Apart from pointing out glaring weaknesses in all the studies, they were especially disconcerted with the methods used in making the industrial forecasts and

the cost/benefit analysis (SAC, 1975:34-44). Given the methodological difficulties, the SAC concluded that the data presented in those two studies suggested that nothing needed to be done in terms of regulating the flow of the river for at least ten years. Those problems to be alleviated by a dam were simply not pressing. The interim should be used for more adequate study before any decision to dam the river was taken (p. 44). These observations only add more empirical weight to the claim contained in the public relations hypothesis.

Two observations regarding PAC are relevant here, both of which suggest that the public participation at Red Deer was meant to give the impression of participation rather than the reality of it. First, and most conspicuous, was the lack of PAC members from among those who would be directly affected by the dam proposal. Initially, there were no people from the immediate area, but later one man, Aage Larsen, was appointed to PAC. One would have expected that priority would have been given to soliciting public input from those who would have to 'pay' the most in terms of the direct impact of the proposal.

The lack of effectiveness by PAC, especially in modifying the proposal goals and the direction of the studies, also suggests that the committee was more of a token gesture than a meaningful attempt at public participation. The minister's rejection of the major PAC recommendation in itself denies the 'public input' of PAC's function. Not allowing PAC members to discuss the studies until they had been approved in final

form by the minister suggests that PAC was to perform only as an "information courier service". PAC appears to have even failed in bringing information to the public, reporting instead only to the organization a particular member was representing rather than to the public in general (Alberta Environment, 1975(a):140).

Two important points emerge here: (1) that a number of potential river problem solutions were systematically removed from public scrutiny, and (2) that the information, so significant to competent public decisions, was essentially inadequate. To make an informed decision regarding what option or options best attacked river problems, the public requires comparative information - the public did not receive comparative information but instead got information biased in one direction. Both the above observations point to the public relations nature of the Red Deer River public participation programme. As earlier discussions have shown, the goals of the programme were determined without public input and a dam had the momentum of history behind it. Now we see the raft of technical studies were not equal to the task of allowing informed public opinion. Rather, the studies only justified what appears to be a decision made long before the public was to be involved. The studies only reinforced a government position dictated by the government policy of industrial growth and decentralization. In doing so the distinct impression is created that the studies were designed to convince a skeptical public that a dam was necessary on the Red Deer River.

The Information

Enough has been said regarding the inadequacy of the major source of information available to the public.⁴ It has been shown quite conclusively that the D of E information was questionable. In fact, the availability/inadequacy of public information was a consistent theme throughout the hearings. Even before the hearings began, and in fact before the study phase was completed, basin residents were suspicious of the government because of a lack of information (Gill and Murri, 1975:135). Many basin residents received their information via rumour and other secondary and tertiary sources. Much of the information received from those sources was contradictory and incomplete and only roused the suspicion of those in the valley. Those people who were in the areas to be directly affected were more than a bit disturbed that they had not been contacted during the study stage. Many area residents were also concerned that the information that they finally did receive left too many questions unanswered.

An excellent example of the information problems occurred after an information meeting held at a Red Deer high school. The meeting was attended by several D of E officials and other 'knowledgeable' people, as well as approximately 400 high school students. A few days following the meeting seven students wrote a letter to the local newspaper. In that letter they exclaimed: "we feel that we are more in the dark now than we were before we attended the meeting. We discovered

that the board that was asked to speak couldn't even answer simple questions that students put before them" (Red Deer Advocate, 15 November 1975:4).

Many of the participants at the public hearings commented on the extreme difficulty in reading the planning reports. As Mr. Rhodes, a member of PAC, noted: "it takes a long time to study a set of books carrying that much information" (Proceedings, 1975(III):256). Aside from the large volume of material which, incidentally, were available only six weeks before the hearings started (Red Deer Advocate, 4 September 1975:3), the reports were written in highly technical language which made them difficult to understand. Both sets of studies suffered the problem of readability. Comments by a grade 9 student from Red Deer are illustrative (incidentally, some of the best submissions were made by students):

I find this brief one of the hardest school projects I have ever had to do. You know why? Because I don't understand so many things... some of the questions seemed unanswered.

It is the general feeling of my class and even the feeling of some composite students who came to speak to us that compared to the first set of information bulletins published in 1975, the second set, meaning the set which was published after the further studies had been completed was much harder to read and harder to understand and said less in more space.

I am a Grade 9 student and I'd really like to know what the alternatives to a dam-site are, but this kind of thing really gets me confused and turns me off reading about the alternatives all together. I don't know why you have to make it so difficult.

In my opinion, and maybe I'm too harsh, but I feel you've buried the fact under a lot of words, complicated charts, and fancy diagrams (Gerry Hoff; Proceedings, 1977(IV):104-105).

Other problems included: (1) complaints about deliberate public misinformation (Mr. R. Mills; Proceedings, 1975(VI):188-91), (2) complaints about government secrecy (Red Deer Advocate, 23 April 1975:1), (3) ignorance of PAC and its informational role (Gill and Murri, 1975:161-62), (4) complaints that most of those close to the proposed project heard only gossip and rumour (Mr. F. Fischer; Proceedings, 1975(III):199), and (5) complaints that complete sets of planning reports were not available until just a few weeks before the hearings (Mr. F. Fischer; Proceedings, 1975(III):170). Complaints of inadequate information only reinforce a conclusion that the public participation programme's information agenda was meant to persuade rather than inform. 5

These observations about information were echoed by Mr. Kinisky, former ECA vice-chairman. In his estimation, information is one of the most critical aspects of public participation - information is power. Providing certain kinds of information to the public, or anyone for that matter, can 'force' a particular decision. Information is absolutely necessary in presenting a particular point of view. The public, generally, does not have the resources to gather all the data necessary and, subsequently, must rely on the decision-making body to provide all the requisite information. In the Red Deer case, the D of E did not perform adequately. Only one document contained information which suggested the government's position may not be the only possibility, and that document came from another agency. As such, the D of E did

present itself as a government 'salesman' (above information gathered in a personal interview, 12 March 1979).

Finally, a category regarding information (in)adequacy was included in the content analysis. Wherever possible, a brief was coded as either commending or condemning the information that was made available to the public. Conflict theory would predict that opponents of the official plan would be more likely to find the information inadequate than would supporters. The null hypothesis is that there will be no difference between feelings of supporters and opponents regarding the information available for public consumption.

Table 7-1

Percentage of supporters and opponents
who saw information as (in)adequate.

		Information	
		adequate	inadequate
Position	support	7 100%	0 0%
	oppose	7 7.5%	86 92.5%
chi-square = 38.87502			
significance = .000			
phi = .67997			

On the basis of the results presented in table 7-1 the null hypothesis is rejected. Although there are a substantial number of missing cases (158), these results only add to the already large amount of empirical evidence which supports the public relations hypothesis.

It would seem that all the evidence to this point suggests that the public participation programme at Red Deer was a thinly-veiled attempt at public persuasion. The information produced and released by the D of E provided little in the way of allowing informed public opinion to be formulated. A dam was to be built on the Red Deer River because it was consistent with government policy. The feasibility studies were not to compare alternative solutions but rather to determine which of two proposed damsites did the least damage in a provincial government perspective. The information provided to the public showed, on very questionable grounds, that a dam at site 6 would aid in the realization of the government's industrial policy. The studies showed that a dam was absolutely necessary if the grand industrial vision was to be achieved, and that the costs of the dam were less than the benefits; this was assuming that the vision was realistic. Those who may have been skeptical or in opposition would, apparently, see the error of their opinions once presented with the 'facts'. The 'facts', though, as contained in the D of E studies were extremely biased - rather than critically assessing both the goals and various alternatives, the goals were taken for granted and only one water management solution was presented: a dam!

The 'Dam' Timing

This last substantive section, aimed at determining

the extent of the public relations nature of the Red Deer public participation, deals with the timing of various events leading to the 'dam' decision. The time at which certain events took place, in relation to the final decision, places the effectiveness of public input in a highly suspicious light. In fact, it appears even moreso that the decision was actually made well in advance of the participation programme. Four specific events are salient here.

First, the initial planning agenda proposed by the minister appears to take a dam for granted. Announcement of the intent to study the river and the feasibility of flow regulation came in May of 1973. Decisions to study only sites 6 and 7 were taken prior to October, 1973 at which time the terms of reference were handed down by the minister. Initial indications were that legislation enabling the construction of a dam could come as early as 6 months later.

Mr. Barret, chairman of PAC, reported on the first meeting: "at the meeting the committee learned the government planned to initiate its study of the dam project in mid-September, finalize a report in mid-December, hold public hearings in mid-January, 1974, and prepare enabling legislation at the end of March, 1974" (Red Deer Advocate, 15 September 1973:3). The general terms of reference for the studies proposed a somewhat longer time frame: "the study shall proceed such that a final report is completed and submitted to permit public hearings to be held in October of 1974. If it is the decision to recommend to the Legislature

that implementation proceed, appropriate legislation shall be drafted for presentation to the fall session of the Legislature" (Alberta Environment, 1975(a):171). In any case, the proposed agenda conveys a 'taken-for-granted' attitude. It appears that the minister fully expected a dam would be built on the river.

The second event is one which has already been mentioned and concerns the letter from Business Development and Tourism to the petrochemical companies. In September of 1975, the D of E released the major portion of the feasibility studies. These studies were to be used by prospective public participants in preparing submissions for the ECA hearings. The hearings were held between November 20 and December 2, 1975. Mr. Dowling, then Minister of Business Development and Tourism, wrote the letter on September 19, 1975. The letter assured the petrochemical firms that the government would provide adequate water supplies for their plants (a copy of that letter can be found in Appendix E). According to the government only a dam on the river could assure those water supplies. This assurance came well before the Red Deer River public hearings and, incidentally, before ERCB approval of the companies' applications.

Thirdly, the 'official doctrine' concerning public participation contained the provision that all major water resources projects required a separate act of the Legislature (see p.217 of Chapter Six). In actual fact, the decision to build a dam on the river was not authorized by an act of the

Alberta Legislature. There was not even a debate on the subject except in an indirect manner. The decision to build the dam was taken in July of 1977 while the Legislature was in recess. In contravening its own 'open government' policy, the government could only reply that the decision was one which had to be made. Mr. Lougheed put it this way in the October, 1977 speech from the throne: "we...made the decision over the course of the summer to construct a dam in the Red Deer River ...well aware this is a controversial decision...(it is) important that government has the courage to proceed with these matters" (Hansard, 1977:1437). The government did not, apparently, have the courage or the integrity of keeping its word to make the decision in a public forum. Instead, the decision was made in the secrecy of cabinet chambers.

Finally, the emasculation of the ECA came upon the heels of the Red Deer decision. Two observations are relevant here. The final ECA report was released on the very day that the government decision was announced: July 18, 1977. It is rather disconcerting that the decision would be announced on the day that the recommendations of the public participation programme were released. Suspicion can only be aroused further when the announcement date is seen in light of the ECA recommendation that a dam at site 6 is totally inappropriate.

Bill 74, creating the Environment Council of Alberta was introduced in the session of the Legislature immediately following the Red Deer decision - October, 1977. Mr. Clark, leader of the opposition, suggested that the changes in the

ECA were a direct result of the ECA Red Deer report: "the recommendations of the ECA frequently compromised, and on some occasions contradicted, the plans developed by this government and by industry. As a result, it appears the cabinet has now undertaken a systematic erosion of the effectiveness and influence of the ECA" (Hansard, 1977:1577). Mr. Russell in effect supported these charges by commenting that a few months prior to the introduction of the legislation he had no reason to believe that changes in the ECA would be necessary. In fact, it was "especially during the time of public responses to the decision on the Red Deer River, it occurred to me that the use of the word 'authority' in the title of the body's name was probably a misnomer" (Mr. Russell; Hansard, 1977:1595-1596).

In sum, the events described above suggest the Red Deer public participation programme was indeed aimed at persuading the public. Several significant events appear to take the decision for granted, the initial planning agenda and the "letter", for example. Assuring water supply is especially clear testimony that the decision was made, for all intents and purposes, before major public involvement. Whether or not industrial concerns actually needed the water is irrelevant. The government vehemently protested that a dam was necessary for industrial development. As such, any assurances to industrial concerns implies that the decision to build the dam was made when assurances were given. The

conspicuous absence of legislative debate and changes in the ECA only confirm the suspicions implied above. By making the decision 'in-camera', the government only showed that it did not want any more public debate over the issue. Stripping the ECA of any vestiges of influence, after the Red Deer fiasco, suggests that the government did not want public participation contradicting its policies in the future. The drastic changes in the ECA compromised any meaningful participation and now more than ever public participation could play the public relations function it did not perform well at Red Deer.

Summary

This chapter was guided by the general hypothesis that the Red Deer River public participation programme was essentially a public relations effort on the part of the government of Alberta. Several pieces of evidence clearly support the notion that the decision was, for all practical purposes, made without any public involvement. Most important here is that the objectives of the whole exercise were 'pre-determined' by the government. A dam on the river was necessary to ensure the rapid industrial growth of the region. Large-scale industrialization was not particularly attractive to most residents of the region. Despite any public input into this important planning stage, the government defined the public interest as its own decentralization and industr-

ialization policy. Events which followed this initial decision were aimed at gaining public acceptance of a dam specifically and the industrial vision generally. In neither case did public input have any influence.

Events beginning as long ago as the 1890's pointed to an historical trend building up momentum for the building of a dam. This trend gained further momentum, or rather is also evident, in the government's 'hidden agenda'. The public hearings and the planning studies did not consider, to any appropriate degree, alternative solutions to river problems. Nor did the hearings or the studies critically analyze the goals of the plan. As such, one is indeed left with the feeling of having been subjected to a 'used car salesman's pitch'. Lack of adequate public information and the timing of important events serve only to confirm conclusions already reached, as did the content analysis.

Taken in total the evidence presented in this section clearly give a solid empirical base to the hypothesis. In gaining empirical validation of this hypothesis, further explanation of the opposition to the official plan emerges. The public relations attempt failed. It failed to convince the 'ordinary citizens' of the Red Deer River basin that the government knew what was best for them. An unsuccessful public relations programme surely does not incorporate the wants and needs of the participating public, it rather attempts to shape public wants and needs. Because they were not heard in all aspects of the decision process, it is not surprising that

the valley's residents reacted in a hostile fashion.

The PR attempt and its failure is intimately related to the first hypothesis under investigation. To be an attempt at persuasion not consultation, the public participation programme had to lack any power base, in a structural sense. Giving any power to the recipients of a public relations strategy is counter-productive. The essence of a public relations scheme is a passive audience - an audience which has no control over the outcome of the procedure to which it is a party.

The above does not imply that all of the 'public' were powerless and were subjected to the government's persuasion attempt. A dam and the goals attendant to it must have served some interest or purpose. As the Red Deer River dam was seen as absolutely necessary to the realization of the government's industrial development vision, one would expect that it was industrial needs which were being accounted for. Conflict theory, in fact, makes that very prediction. The primacy of productive activity places economic/industrial in a privileged position. Chapter Eight, following, discusses that very notion contained in the third and final conflict hypothesis.

Notes

1. A detailed study-by-study examination could be presented here but it does not appear that such an exercise is warranted. Citing examples from some of the studies will suffice to make the point. Discussions to this juncture illustrate quite well the pervasive lack of value-freeness.
2. Incidentally, the cost/benefit included a petrochemical plant built at Joffre, Alberta. This plant should have been excluded because the decision to build it occurred before the dam decision was made. In fact, officials of Alberta Gas Ethylene, the plant's owners, stated publicly that a dam was not part of the location decision and the AGE "resented being used as a reason for the dam" (Red Deer Advocate, 10 April 1975:1).
3. A final observation regarding the value-freeness of the experts must be noted. Many of the consultants, who undertook the studies, made public statements which in no way could be construed as being value-free. The most illuminating example was the appearance of one of the consultants, Dr. Brooker of EBA Engineering, at the Drumheller hearings. At that time Dr. Brooker made an impassioned plea to the basin residents, and the ECA, to accept the D of E proposal because the government's industrial policy was extremely important and beneficial (Proceedings, 1977(VI):48-51). Dr. Brooker stated that dissenters did so out of selfishness and ignorance. He also claimed that "complaints based on destructive criticism relative to detailed technical issues in which only qualified professionals are knowledgeable are both unproductive and unrelated. And in my view, irresponsible as they are an imposition on the good will of the community and Government" (p. 52).
4. The other basic source of information, excluding media, was information meetings. In all 18 meetings were held - seven prior to the 1975 hearings and 11 prior to the 1977 hearings - as far as could be ascertained.
5. The 1976 ECA opinion poll also showed that a substantial number of people were quite dissatisfied with the study which had been done (ECA, 1976(a):16). It is also interesting to note that both government and industry authorities turned down an excellent opportunity to clear up much of the confusion and suspicion at Red Deer. In May of 1975, Jim Proudfoot, a Red Deer College instructor, attempted to organize a 'petro-forum' on the local T.V. station, CKRD (Red Deer Advocate, 22 May 1975:3). He contacted the government and Alberta Gas Ethylene in this regard. The proposed T.V. program would discuss the AGE petrochemical plant and the proposed dam - as it appeared 'the two went together'. Both parties refused

to cooperate on the grounds that the two were not related (Proceedings, 1975(IV):21).

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Chapter 8

Economic Interests - Conflict Theory III

This portion of the research was, for several reasons, not as extensive as that guided by other conflict hypotheses. Research concerning the dominance of economic interests was indicated by a proposition of conflict theory, by general stress placed on economic objectives by planning and planners, and by the emphasis placed upon industrial growth throughout the Red Deer River case. To reiterate, the general hypothesis here is that economic interests tend to dominate North American society in a broad sense. Furthermore, this tendency is even more evident in situations of overt conflict of interest. There is no question that a conflict of interests occurred at Red Deer. Government insistence that a dam was necessary for industrialization in the region placed those interests in conflict with others - agricultural, environmental, etc.

Government insistence on a dam for industrial purposes also suggests that economic/industrial interests were dominant. Research proceeded beyond the general impression, and is presented below. Much of what is described below has been discussed earlier, which points to the close relationship between the three general conflict hypotheses.

History of the Dominance of Industrial Interests

Dominance of the so-called growth ethic, especially in North America, is certainly not new. The maxim that "growth means success" has long dominated economic and social policy. A good example is the consistent reference to lack of growth in economic indicators, such as GNP, as indication of under-development, and, furthermore, cause for alarm (c.f. Levitt, 1971: 75-77). As McCormack notes:

Economic growth was considered an absolute good by many Canadians, and by none more than those in the West. Just as the nation aimed for the achievement of a 'Big Canada' through the National Policy, each province, city and town strove for its own growth. In the heyday of free enterprise such growth could be promoted only by the entrepreneur, and the captain of industry became the hero of the age. Any obstacle in the way of his schemes was contrary to the public good (McCormack, 1977: 4-5).

The boom or growth mentality was nowhere more alive than in Alberta. The discovery of oil in Alberta served only to intensify the struggle for rapid industrial growth. Nothing should stand in the way of exploiting Alberta's oil and gas resources to the fullest possible extent. Oil in an energy-

hungry world was a sure stepping-stone to large-scale industrialization and "Success".

Obsession with growth has brought with it an insistence on short-term expediency to the detriment of long-term benefits (Pratt, 1976:23). Emphasis on short-term profit is not new. A study by Pentalnd, for the Canadian Task Force on Labour Relations, discusses the dominance of mercantile capital in Canada. More importantly it points up the "widespread acceptance of its 'short-sighted' mentality which emphasizes immediate gain over long-run profitability" (Mahon, 1977:184).

An excellent example of the dominance of short-run over long-run benefits is the continuing and increasing destruction of farmland in Canada. A McLean's magazine article, dated September 20, 1976, claims that:

between 1966 and 1971 one million acres, 10% of the improved farmland of Southern Ontario was taken out of production. Not surprisingly, Ontario now must import beef, pork, poultry, and dairy products, which were supplied by the province's own farms in 1962. Agriculture Canada estimates that land equivalent to a 250 acre farm is taken out of production somewhere in Canada every day (cited in Proceedings, 1977(I):10).

The 1950's and 1960's saw a shift in the economic base of Alberta. Prior to the 1950's, Alberta was primarily an agricultural province. After 1950 the emphasis shifted to an economic dependence on oil extraction. The extent of the shift depends, to a large extent, upon the indicators which are used to measure the shift. Using employment as an indicator sees agriculture remaining as the prominent industry, but measures

of revenue-produced see the petroleum industry as the most important to Alberta. Although, a study by E.H. Schaffer, of the University of Alberta, has shown that between 1961 and 1970 one-half of the new jobs created in Alberta were in oil (cited in Pratt, 1977:145).

Moreover, the growth or boom ethic has produced in most of Canada a 'business-state alliance' (c.f. Panich, 1977); this alliance is especially pronounced in Alberta (c.f. Pratt, 1977). Although there are claims that the Canadian state has aided business by reducing uncertainty in industrial ventures through "partially subsidizing the costs of capital and by guaranteeing high levels of demand" (Wolfe, 1977:254). Two of Alberta's most prominent economic institutions are curious mixtures of state intervention and private enterprise - the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) and Albert Gas Trunk Line Ltd. (AGTL). Both of these organizations were involved, to some degree, in the Red Deer River affair.

The ERCB, formerly the Petroleum and Natural Gas Conservation Board, was established in 1938 "to fix production quotas and prevent waste" (Pratt, 1977:136). The board's mandate was to prevent physical and economic waste of petroleum and natural gas in Alberta. An Alberta Royal Commission established that overproduction and low prices had brought chaos to the industry (1940:5-10). To achieve the 'non-waste' aims, the board prorations production quotas in efforts to stabilize prices. In this way the state joins in the windfall through higher royalties and essentially becomes a natural

resource "cartel secretariat" (Pratt, 1977:134-138).

In June of 1974 the ERCB's mandate was extended to comply with the government of Alberta's newly-created petrochemical policy (Rickwood and Tillack, n.d.:8-9).¹ Section 42 of the Oil and Gas Conservation Act requires energy resource projects to obtain an industrial permit from the ERCB before construction. This restriction applies to any petrochemical product in Alberta.

Industrial permits are not granted by the ERCB "unless in its opinion it is in the public interest to do so"(see section 42(5) of the act). Subsection 5 further defines the criteria by which the public interest will be determined. The decision criteria for the ERCB are: (1) the efficient use of gas and gas products, and (2) the present and future availability of hydrocarbons in Alberta. The ERCB was involved in the Red Deer case to the extent that it granted industrial permits to four petrochemical companies proposing plants for the Red Deer area (ERCB, 1975:11-1,11-2).

Quite often ERCB decisions involve public hearings, although hearings are held at the discretion of the Minister of the Environment (Rickwood and Tillack, n.d.:9). ERCB hearings tend to be very technical in nature, concerned basically with prices, markets, and resource availability. Most often, the only intervenors at ERCB hearings are industry representatives. For example, between 1971 and 1975, of the participants at ERCB petrochemical hearings, 78.8% were petrochemical firms, 6.6% were petrochemical trade associations,

and only 0.4% were non-associated individuals (Rickwood and Tillack, n.d.:3-4). Apparently, the mandate of the board precludes effective participation at its hearings by participants other than industry actors. The ERCB rarely considers social, environmental, or other factors in its decisions since these variables are outside its jurisdiction (ERCB, 1975: 6-2); and, apparently, outside its definition of the public interest.

AGTL was born of the same concerns as the ERCB. Its original charter granted AGTL permission to gather and transmit natural gas in Alberta. In 1974, the government expanded AGTL's charter to allow it to enter the petrochemical field as well (Pratt, 1977:143). AGTL is a quasi-state enterprise, in that it was organized by the government of Alberta but was sold to private hands. AGTL still has extremely strong ties to the government of Alberta. The only firm to build a petrochemical plant in the Red Deer area was Alberta Gas Ethylene, a wholly-owned subsidiary of AGTL.

Pratt concludes that Alberta's state-business alliance has been mutually beneficial. The alliance has provided large amounts of royalty revenue for the government, witness the Alberta Heritage Savings and Trust Fund, for example. The business community also had much to gain from the alliance and in support of Lougheed's economic objectives (decentralization and diversification). Use of state power aids in achieving (1)'fair market value' (i.e. high prices) for oil and gas, (2) government revenues used for diversific-

ation and partnership in economic ventures, and (3) maintenance of a favorable climate for foreign investment (Pratt, 1977:150-151).

Data presented above do suggest a dominant position for economic/industrial interests. The growth ethic, which favors industrial interests, especially in their emphasis on short-term profitability, was very much in evidence at the time of the Red Deer drama. Industrial dominance also appears in the historical tendency toward growth. In Alberta, agriculture with its long-run time frame was replaced by industrial (especially petroleum) concerns beginning in the 1950's. Two important Alberta economic institutions, the ERCB and AGTL, point to the prioritization of industrial concerns in their intimate connection to the Alberta government. An important observation here is the apparent 'big business mentality' of the government.

Case Data Pertaining to Industrial Interests

Data gathered specifically related to the Red Deer case bear a remarkable resemblance to the historical trends identified above. The first piece of evidence regards the initial impetus for taking some action to solve the problems of the Red Deer River. Some evidence has appeared which suggests that industrial development was not one of the original motivating forces behind taking action at Red Deer. As stated earlier, flow, erosion, flood, and quality problems

had plagued the river over a number of years. Basin residents had, over the years, tried to get the government to do something. Most of their requests emerged from concerns over losing land to erosion and floods, for example. Their requests for aid often fell on deaf ears. One exception was the installation of a U-tube aerator (weir) on the river in the winter of 1971-1972 (Alberta Environment, 1971:34). This aerator had been successful in raising winter oxygen level by 70% (Environment News, 1972: vo. 2, no. 1:4).

It was not until after initial concern for the river and plans to at least study it had been taken that industrial concerns appeared on the scene. In quick fashion, the force behind damming the river became the government's industrial dream. An exchange took place between Mrs. Dortha Broadbent of the Federation of Alberta Naturalists and Mr. R. Bailey, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Environment, at one of the Red Deer River hearings:

Mrs. Broadbent:

I have a question for Mr. Bailey. When this dam was first presented as being immanent possibility, this happened in 1973 and the people of Red Deer were told at that time that the dam was simply for domestic use. A few skeptical people suggested it may be for industry and it meant like Dow Chemical and AGT (she is probably referring to AGE), and Dupont appeared on the scene, but we would tell them no, the dam was definitely for domestic use. As the dam became more and more in the newspapers, and the possibility became immanent, we were told that it was possibly for some industrial use, and yet Alberta Gas Ethylene denied that the dam was for their use. They emphatically denied it. Yesterday in your presentation, Mr. Bailey, you said

that the dam was needed for Alberta Gas Trunkline's Petrochemical Plant. I'd like you to clarify that please.

Mr. Bailey:

When the initial studies were directed to be undertaken by the Minister of Environment, this was prior to the discussions or ideas of the petrochemical industry entered the area. Now whether there had been some in camera discussions on that at a political level, I don't know; but initially in announcing the studies the Minister indicated that it was in fact for domestic and municipal uses.

At a subsequent time, it was then brought forward that there was an interest in industrialization in the Red Deer area as part of the decentralization policy; and at that time the Minister made the announcement which I quoted yesterday where he said that if there was to be continued growth in the Red Deer River area and the opportunity for industry to become established there, in his view, a dam would be essential on the Red Deer River to provide for the water supplies.

And you're quite right that initially industry was not part of the picture announced at the political level. Subsequently, and I think it was about the time the Minister made the decision to include sites 6 and 7 that he also advised the Public Advisory Committee in Red Deer that industry was also part of the picture (Proceedings, 1975(VI):184-185; emphasis added).

Of the problems of the river, only supplying water for industrial needs required a dam. The problems of erosion, floods, poor quality, and future municipal needs could be easily solved by other management options. The final solution adopted by the government, in fact, recognized the need of facilities other than a dam. Coupled with the fact that a dam was the final decision, the fact that industrial motives entered the picture at a later stage testifies to the strength

of industrial interests. That industrial officials claimed not to need assured water indicates the extent of the 'big business' ethic of the government. This conclusion gains even more weight in light of a public statement made by the premier. "Premier Lougheed said if the people of the area do not want industry, it would be moved. He said the government does not intend to impose developments the community does not want" (Edmonton Journal, 16 May 1975:75). Given the desires of basin residents discovered earlier, it appears that the government was, indeed, imposing industry upon the area.

There is also the issue of jobs. Most often, increased employment opportunities were used as a justification for the massive industrial program. There is no doubt that jobs were an important issue to area residents (see RDRPC, 1976:7; ECA, 1976:39). But, creating jobs does not mean petrochemical and coal plants only. The industries preferred by the government were highly capital-intensive as opposed to labour-intensive, a fact well recognized by at least one cabinet minister (Red Deer Advocate, 3 February 1977:17).

The sociological study confirmed this observation. In 1971, 24% of the area labour force was employed directly in agriculture, while only 2.9% were directly employed in other primary and processing industries (an occupational category which included more than just the petrochemical and coal industries) (Gill and Murri, 1975:85). In absolute

figures farming and other primary industries employed 12,365 and 1,640 persons respectively. \$656,462,000 of capital supported 12,365 farm jobs while much more capital was needed to support the 1,640 jobs in other primary industries (RDRPC, 1969; RDRPC, 1978:26). ²

Not only was the capital-to-labour ration smaller for agriculture but the employment and revenue multiplier effect of agriculture is also larger than for other primary industries. According to Dr. Bentley, of the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Alberta:

Although less than six percent of Canada's labor force is engaged in primary agricultural production, about 40 percent of Canada's economic activity is directly or indirectly dependent upon agriculture. In Edmonton there is a sharp awareness of the oil, gas, and related petrochemical industries, as well as those based on them, but the packing plant industry is that city's largest industrial employer. Thus, because primary agricultural production entails use of such things as fertilizers, pesticides, vehicles, and power, in addition to transportation, processing, storage, retailing, and so forth, each dollar's worth of farm produce generates about seven dollar's worth of economic activity. Thus, economists say that the multiplier effect is about seven. The multiplier effect for petroleum is about three (cited in Proceedings, 1977(VIII):90).

In terms of revenue produced petroleum related industries top agriculture. The oil and gas industry generated \$135 million in revenue for 1967 compared to \$63.5 million for agriculture (RDRPC, 1969:11-14). These revenue figures are misleading in three respects. First, much of the revenue is produced by foreign-owned firms, thus leaving open the question of how much of the revenue remains in the

area and the province. Secondly, using the multipliers from above, agriculture far outdistances petroleum in economic activity generated. The multiplier advantage of agriculture is compounded by the fact that most of the products of the petroleum industry are exported in raw form. And, finally, agricultural enterprise is based on a renewable resource - the land - which apparently has an infinite life. Whereas petroleum industries are based on finite resources.

The above 'facts' are presented for several reasons. First of all, the D of E economic study, referred to earlier, did not contain any of this essential economic analysis. Pointing out the job, revenue, and resource-life factors indicates a quantifiable cost of flooding farmland. Site 6 would flood 2200 acres of prime agricultural land, and the industrial agenda put tremendous pressure on other farmland for non-agricultural uses. These costs cannot simply be swept aside as a category of unquantifiable, residual costs, as they were in the economic study. Given the perspective taken by the economic study, and all of the D of E studies for that matter, it is not surprising that these costs were not dealt with to any extent for they were not strictly provincial costs. The cost of losing farmland would have to be borne by the farmers and other residents of the river basin. The government would only have to pay 'fair market value' to purchase the land.

Other alternatives could have solved the problems in the river without the same drastic effect on the region's

economic mainstay. Apparently, the supposed needs of industry were of higher priority even in the face of the overwhelming importance of agriculture to the region. These observations clearly indicate the 'big business mentality' of the government of Alberta. This mentality places the windfall short-term profitability of the petroleum business, which cannot be questioned, above the long-term, stable profitability of agriculture and the livelihood of 110,000 Albertans.

The third aspect of industrial interests concerns the fact that no corporate-industrial representatives felt any need to appear before the ECA. This conspicuous lack of an industrial voice at the hearings could mean any of several things; some of which must, of necessity, remain speculative. First, only an ERCB permit was necessary for plant construction. The ERCB considers only certain factors while the ECA examines a much larger range of variables in determining the feasibility and necessity of a particular project. This meant that firms need only show that they will use gas and gas products in 'physically and economically efficient' ways. In practise this means that resources extracted need only good markets at high prices. The cost/benefit analysis presented to the ERCB by the petrochemical firms, for instance, contained no mention of the environmental and social costs, no mention of the opportunity cost of farmland taken out of production, no concern over municipal service costs, and so forth. The board suggested that these costs would be minimal, that the projects would be beneficial overall, and that development

was appropriate because it complied with government decentralization policy (ERCB, 1975:8-26; section 7.5). By avoiding the ECA, firms did not have to worry about potentially damning analysis.

The BD and T letter, referred to earlier, also suggests that industrial actors did not need to appear before the ECA. Their case had been apparently taken up by at least one government department. D of E insistence on the necessity of a dam for large-scale industrial growth suggests that a second government department had, at least implicitly, taken up the industrial banner. The 'big business' ethic of the government as a whole has shown that the government would act quite in the interests of those absent industrial actors. Seastone's (1975:227) implication that the government should reduce industrial uncertainty is a clear indication of the strength of industrial interests.

Content Analysis

As a final test of the industrial interests hypothesis, the content analysis categorized participation actors in terms of the interest they represented. For the purposes of analysis, the original five categories were collapsed into just two - industrial/government and non-industrial.³ The null hypothesis is that there will be no difference in interest represented between supporters and opponents of the official plan. On the basis of the results presented in

Table 8-1

Interest represented by supporters and opponents

	Interest	
	industrial/ government	non-industrial
support	14 87.5%	2 12.5%
Position		
oppose	21 13.5%	134 86.5%
chi-square = 44.68618 significance = .000 phi = .53379		

table 8-1 the null hypothesis is rejected. Results of the content analysis serve only to re-affirm the conclusions reached in the above discussion.

One final observation, related to the content analysis, is in order here. Those actors who supported the official plan tended to be government officials, both local and provincial, and local businessmen. Their support seemed predicated on increased profit-making activities resulting from the construction of a dam, more so than any other concern. As Mrs. Broadbent remarked: "politicians, businessmen, industrialists, some of the news media and all those concerned with financial gain are advocating this dam. Those truly concerned with the present and future of this central region of Alberta are urging caution" (Proceedings, 1975(V):131). Mrs. Broadbent's comments are borne out by examples such as a local editorial entitled "Welcome Dupont" (Red Deer Advocate, 11 April 1975:4), a special insert entitled "This is the Dawn

of the Petro Age" (Red Deer Advocate, 22 April 1975), and an Industrial Development Week in Red Deer, specially declared by the mayor one week before the hearings (Red Deer Advocate, 11 November 1975:1). The purpose of the week was "to promote the concept of industrial development and to help the public gain knowledge of the benefits industry brings" (Red Deer Advocate, 11 November 1975:1).

These last pieces of evidence, coupled with other data presented in this chapter, given an unambiguous indication that industrial interests did, indeed, rule the day. Despite pleadings, rational argument, and hostile action, the massive industrial vision of the Alberta government was destined to become a reality. The priority of that industrial dream is abundantly obvious. That the conflicting interests at Red Deer may have reached some compromise is evident in the final ECA report. That the government chose to ignore the advice of the public participants is, in and of itself, proof of whose interests were being promoted.

Summary

The discussions in Chapter Eight have attempted to show that economic/industrial interests tended to dominate the decision-making process both historically and in the case at hand. The most obvious implication of this hypothesis is that a result of such domination will be the lack of concern over other interests which may be involved. If other interests

are 'glossed over' a hostile reaction seems an almost inevitable outcome.

Much of what was said above, admittedly, may imply or concern 'behind-closed-doors' decision-making. What is very important here is the industrial growth ethic or mentality of the government of Alberta. This ethic is very evident in government insistence that a dam need be built on the river to ensure world-scale industrial development in the Red Deer River valley. Such a policy posture in effect promotes industrial interests to the detriment of other interests. In Red Deer the obvious agricultural interests did not receive the attention they may have deserved. The final decision and much of what came before it simply swept those concerns aside - 'someone has to pay for progress'. The fact that industrial actors felt no apparent compulsion to argue their case before the ECA is ample testimony of their power.⁴

The state-business alliance pointed out by Pratt has remained in tact despite the Red Deer River affair. The government chose to ignore the ECA recommendation that any industrial concerns who choose to locate in the basin be responsible for supplying water on their own (ECA, 1977:96). By promoting the dam, for the benefit of industrial growth, the government was asking the region's and the province's residents to subsidize the firms affected. The subsidy requested was substantial given the uncertain nature of the government dream and the environmental, social and economic costs associated with that dream. The words of Mr. Fred Schutz

will provide a fitting ending:

The industrialization of Alberta may be Peter's dream, but for Albertans who value breathable air, clear, unpolluted water in their streams, fish uncontaminated by mercury, rural peace and quiet, the family farm, wild creatures in their natural habitat, it could prove to be a nightmare (Proceedings, 1975(VI):71).

Discussion of Findings - Conflict Theory

Data gathered to assess conflict theory utilized several sources and techniques. The main methodological technique used was that known as case study. Materials were collected which would aid in assessing the empirical validity of the hypothetical claims made. Admittedly, theoretical evaluation could not specify a significance level, for instance, but nonetheless an evaluation could be made.

Power and structural relationships provided the focus of the research, in general. More specifically, three general propositions acted as 'working hypotheses': (1) lack of impact of public participants will be found in the structural relationships among the actors and in the participation vehicle used, (2) the public participation programme was essentially a public relations effort, in that a decision was reached and the public, then, had to be persuaded to accept it, and (3) economic interests will tend to dominate the decision-making process resulting in other interests being 'glossed over'. Underlying these hypotheses is a more general answer to the question of why such hostile reactions, as

witnessed at Red Deer, emerged. In its most general form the conflict paradigm's reply is that the opposition was a result of the public's not being heard in the process they were asked to take part in. The three hypotheses delineated above suggest why the public was not heard. Data was gathered to discover whether those hypotheses had any empirical foundation, and simultaneously explain the emergence of hostility at Red Deer.

In general, the evidence amassed does provide a solid empirical base for the theoretical claims of the conflict approach. Public participants were not heard at Red Deer as was well documented in the 'outcomes vs. desires' discussion. They were not heard because in the first place the structure of the relationships between the participation vehicles, the ECA and PAC, did not provide any assurances that public advice would play any role in the decision made. The ECA's only power was continually undercut by the government and PAC appeared to be more of an 'honorary' body than any sort of operative group. Also, a great deal of resources were expended long before any public input was solicited. As a result, the changes in the official plan desired by the public went unheeded. Public participation in the later stages of the planning process, as was the case at Red Deer, presents a formidable structural barrier to changing preferred modes of action.

Moreover, a great deal of evidence documents the public relations nature of the participation programme. If

the public had very little influence over the decision process, one very relevant reason is found in the data which attests to the fact that the decision was, for all intents and purposes, made by the government without the benefit of public input. The overall goals of the planning exercise, decentralization and massive industrial growth were not subject to public scrutiny. A dam on the river was deemed entirely necessary if the government was to achieve its industrial objectives. Such being the case, the feasibility studies, for examples, were less than value-free - they appeared more as promotion devices than as instruments by which the public could make competent comparative analysis in reaching a decision. If the government was indeed trying only to persuade rather than consult the public, as the evidence suggests, it is no surprise that the participation structures lacked impact.

Finally, data was gathered to test the hypothesis regarding the dominance of industrial interests. A claim basic to the conflict explanation is that certain interests are overlooked in the decision process resulting in hostile public reactions. The evidence gathered brought into bold relief the historical and case domination of industrial interests. The overall government objectives showcase the 'big business mentality' of the Alberta government. Overemphasis on large-scale industrial growth glossed over the legitimate concerns of especially agricultural interests at Red Deer. The lack of power in the participation process and the public relations nature of the whole procedure meant

that those other interests were not taken account of in the final decision. As a result of not being heard there is no wonder that many of those affected by the decision reacted in an extremely hostile fashion.

Several other, related claims of the conflict perspective were upheld by this portion of the research. Government insistence on the interrelation between the dam and its industrial vision suggests a pre-determined public interest. Implicitly and explicitly the government claimed that its industrial vision was in the best interests of all Albertans. If this was as they claimed, they did not convince many of the residents of the river valley. Nor did they, in fact, present a convincing case that other alternatives could not have attained the same benefits in a less costly manner. To determine a true public interest some negotiation must take place where costs and benefits of several 'visions' are compared. But to reach a negotiated public interest, public participation must come early in the decision process and public participants must have some assurances of being heard.

Another very obvious conclusion is related to the nature of the planning process and planners themselves. As was seen, the planning studies at Red Deer were far from 'value-free'. Because of the acceptance of government policy as the guiding factor in research, the value-neutrality of the studies was compromised. Planning is not an apolitical, technical process, as the elitists would have us believe.

The process is by nature as much political as it is technical. This does not deny the technical aspects of planning, for the costs identified by the planners were necessary if a competent decision was to be made.

This brings us to some speculation as to alternative explanations for the elitist claims of public apathy, incompetence, and self-interest. Reinterpretation is especially important given the findings of the elitist research. Findings reported in Chapter Five upheld only one of the elitist claims - the one dealing with public apathy. It is indisputable that the public is generally apathetic towards political decision-making. As suggested in Chapter Five, such an observation is just that - simply an observation, not an explanation. The more important question is: "why is the public apathetic?".

Most elitist explanation suggests that the public is 'naturally' apathetic. But that implication does not explain why only some of the public are apathetic. Many elitist theorists go on to claim that apathy is the result of socialization - or, more precisely, differential socialization. They tell us that differential experiences at home, at school, on the job, result in those of high SES being more politically aware and active. Reference to differential socialization implies a structural, rather than a personal, explanation. Those of high SES have experiences which encourage participation, especially in terms of work experiences and the like.

Moreover, the structure of the political arrangements in Canada may themselves discourage participation.

First of all, the very essence of representative government compels an apathetic public. Public input is sought only at well-spread intervals, and that input is simply a vote. Voting must voice opinion on so many issues that it must become meaningless. In such a situation, apathy should not be surprising at all.

In the case at hand, research has shown that the structure of the Red Deer public participation was such that the public had very little, if no, meaningful input. If Red Deer is representative of other participation programmes, as it seems to be of representative government in general, apathy should be expected. This is not to say that future public participation programmes must not consider apathy, for they must or else that public participation is doomed. It only suggests that the cause of apathy will most likely be found, not in the personality of the ordinary citizen, but in the structure of the participation programme itself. If public participation is to be meaningful, the public must be heard.

The discussions of information provide an alternative explanation of supposed public incompetence. First of all, it was shown quite convincingly that the ordinary citizens did have a good grasp of the issues involved. To say that opposition emerged at Red Deer as a result of ignorance denies the importance information has in making competent decisions. It could be that the incompetence observed by elitists is simply the result of a lack of good comparative information. That the people at Red Deer were opposed to the decision made

is better explained by the fact that they did not get good comparative information from the government; than by claiming that they were incompetent. Again, this does not deny a place for experts in the planning process.

Finally, to claim that ordinary citizens do not possess the requisite 'public-regarding' ethos is misleading. Such a claim implies that the public interest can be known before a planning process begins. At Red Deer the public interest was, indeed, assumed before the planning process was in full swing. The point is that only a particular interest was embodied in the objectives defined by the government - industrial interests. Furthermore, it was shown that those who supported the official plan did so for reasons which were as self-centered as those who opposed the plan. The implication here related to the determination of the public interest has already been stated.

The data gathered, then, uphold the contention that the opposition which emerged at Red Deer can best be explained by reference to structural and power variables. The structure of a public participation programme must ensure that the public will actually have a voice in the decision reached. Future public participation programmes will have to take into account factors isolated by this research if meaningful participation is to become a reality. It is interesting to note that Rickwood and Tillack (n.d.), in examining the public participation regarding Alberta's fertilizer industry, found a pattern of events almost identical to that discovered in this study.

If these two studies are representative of other participation programmes in Alberta and the rest of Canada, then the variables identified (legislation, information, timing, planning stage, etc.) will be of use in designing programmes which will be more successful in the future.

Notes

1. In 1971, a Social Credit Government changed the PNGCB to the ERCB.
2. Also, see McGregor (n.d.:21). This study shows quite clearly that the petroleum industry has one of the largest 'employment capitalization' ratios of all industries in Canada, at \$108,000 per job; while Red Deer River basin agricultural employment required only slightly more than \$53,000 of capital per job, which is less than half the petroleum capital cost.
3. The five original categories were: industrial, government, environmental, agricultural, and other. Given the discussions immediately preceding the rationale behind the use of only economic/government and non-industrial should be clear.
4. These observations are meant to imply that no 'dark conspiracy' was operative. Simply by promoting massive industrial development the government was, in fact, acting in the interests of those enterprises affected.

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Chapter 9

Conclusions and Implications

Introduction

This study was based upon the assumption that public participation in public decision-making is a phenomenon which is here to stay. Despite the rapid rise in demands for public participation there are many signs which point to the failure of the Canadian experience. Thus, the main impetus of this study was ultimately a practical one - the apparent need for more effective public participation programmes in the future.

A second assumption basic to this study is that the practical need could very well benefit from the use of analytical models. This pointed to a second 'failure' within

the area of public participation. Not only has the practise of public participation apparently failed, but students of the area have also failed to articulate and apply coherent, systematic theoretical models. Thus, two objectives were set for this study: a) a desire to understand and suggest improvements for the practise of public participation in formal political decision-making, and b) a need to clearly elucidate a theory or theories of public participation, something which had not been done. These two objectives, then, form the basic implications of the study: the theoretical and the practical.

Although the desire was to understand the whole of the Canadian experience, such an undertaking was beyond this study. We could only hope to make some initial, necessary steps towards that overall goal. As such, a single case study was chosen as a means by which the study objectives could be fulfilled. That case involved examining the events which lead to a 1977 government of Alberta decision to build a dam on the Red Deer River. That 1977 decision was preceded by a rather extensive public participation programme which involved a voluminous series of planning studies, a public advisory committee, and two sets of public hearings. The studies and the advisory committee were organized by the Alberta Department of the Environment; and the hearings were carried out by the Alberta Environment Conservation Authority, which was a government agency created specifically as a public participation vehicle for environmental decision-making. The case study involved the use of several data

collection techniques which, incidentally, comprise a third set of implications of the study.

Two competing theoretical approaches were utilized by this study. Those two models, the elitist and conflict paradigms, had to be 'constructed'. The public participation literature contains very little discussion in terms of overall social and political theory. Consequently, the two models were derived from existing socio-political theorization. Included in the models were social and political theory and derivative theories of planning and public participation. Analysis consisted of applying the models to the events of the Red Deer River episode. Implications of the research findings fall into three areas and are discussed below.

Before discussing the implications of this research it appears appropriate to briefly recapitulate the preceeding eight chapters. As indicated above, the first task undertaken was a construction of two competing analytical models. These two models were referred to as the elitist and conflict models. To avoid confusion it should be noted that both models agree on what is a basic description of existing socio-political arrangements in modern society: that public decision-making structures are hierarchical and elitist in nature. From that point on they are in quite disagreement.

Briefly, the elitist model suggests that decision-making structures are elitist because they must be. Reminiscent of the Davis and Moore view of social stratification, elitist theory claims that due to the imperatives deriving

from increasingly specialized division of labor, only a few individuals are capable of making adequate public decisions. This points up the basic emphasis of elitist theory - the requirement of role performance. Furthermore, societal roles must be performed adequately if stability, both in an overall societal and sub-system sense, is to be maintained. The highly technical nature of planning, or public decision-making, requires particular personal attributes - high motivation, competence, and community-mindedness - which the general public lacks. High levels of public participation will only 'upset the apple cart', as the saying goes.

The above brief description, then, implies the hypotheses tested and therefore an explanation of the question basic to this study: "why was the Red Deer River episode a failure?". An answer to that question lies in the notion that there was 'too much participation'. That is, the general public was involved to such a degree that their basic personal characteristics, outlined above, lead to failure. In other words, the necessary elitism in planning became jeopardized and inevitable instability followed.

In contradistinction, conflict theory claims that it is the elitism in planning itself which leads to failure in public participation generally and at Red Deer specifically. This basic claim then focuses attention upon a different set of variables which center around the structure of socio-political relationships. Conflict theory assumes that different individuals have different desires and needs which can,

and often does, lead to social conflict. This assumption stands in contrast to the elitist assumption that society is organized around a set of major value premises which all members of society are in basic agreement with. To understand human behavior it is first necessary to understand the nature of conflict. The outcome of conflict situations is basically dependent upon the power relationship of the participants. As individuals are born into a set of on-going social relationships, the structure of those relationships will manifest power differentials and will have a determining effect on behavior. Furthermore, conflict theory posits that typically economic interests have dominated modern society to the detriment of other interests.

The conflict approach hypothesizes that the answer to public participation failure lies in the structure of that participation. Hostility emerging from a public participation experience is due to the lack of impact by public participation on the outcome of a planning process of which they are a part. Without impact participation tends to be cooptative and meaningless. The tendency of economic interests to dominate means that other interests will suffer, all of which suggests that a hostile public should not be surprising.

The testing of the hypotheses derived from the two analytical approaches utilized several sources of data and several collection techniques. The basic data collection methods were that of content analysis and case study. In brief, the hypotheses of the elitist approach found very

little empirical support. Very few of the relationships hypothesized were borne out, except those dealing with (1) general public apathy (only a small percentage of the Red Deer River basin residents participated) and (2) socio-economic status (in general participants tended to reside in urban areas which suggests higher socio-economic status). As such, the explanation of the failure of the Red Deer River experience proffered by elitist theory lost much of its credibility.

Conflict hypotheses, on the other hand, fared much better. Although the precision in assessing elitist hypotheses was not present it could be safely concluded that conflict claims had substantially more basis in fact. The structure of relationships between the public participants, here operationalized as the Environment Conservation Authority and the Public Advisory Committee, was such that the public was placed in a very subordinate position. Other evidence showed that the Red Deer decision was made long before any substantial public input, giving the whole exercise the distinct flavor of a public relations programme. Finally, evidence was gathered, though not to the extent of the other conflict hypotheses, which showed the economic/industrial interests were ascendent in the Red Deer River dam episode¹.

The dismal showing of elitist hypotheses regarding personal attributes of participants, coupled with the findings of the 'conflict research', suggests that understanding public participation should proceed from examination of structural/

conflict/power variables. Lack of impact by public participants goes much farther in explaining the emergent hostility at Red Deer than does reference to the supposed personal characteristics of the 'ordinary citizens' who participated. This piece of research is by no means absolutely conclusive but it certainly does point out the directions that attempts at fuller understanding should take. The results of the research have several theoretical, practical, and future research implications which comprise the content of the remainder of this chapter.

Before continuing, it is necessary to recognize the "generalization problem" faced by this study. As discussed in Chapter Four, case study does indeed suffer from an inability to generalize its findings over space. As such, all of the implications discussed below must be seen in the light of a qualification as follows: "if the Red Deer River experience is representative of other public participation episodes in Canada, then...". Assuming that there is some homogeneity of socio-political experiences and arrangements across Canada, then the results of this study can be applied elsewhere. If nothing else, this thesis does at least point out avenues for the future of the sociology of, and practise of, public participation. This very qualification, though, raises at least one extremely interesting possibility for future research which is discussed in the last section of this chapter.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of the present work fall into two basic categories: 1. implications for social and political theory, and 2. implications for the theory of planning and public participation. In sum, and as indicated above, the basic consequence of this thesis is that further theorization must, at least, pay more attention to structural variables including concepts of power and conflict. This does not deny the validity of some elitist concerns, nor does it settle a long-standing debate in sociology, but it does mean that a change in focus is in order. That change in focus sees notions of stability replaced by development and consensus replaced by conflict with more attention paid to 'power' and the idea that the structure of social relationships plays a very important part in shaping, and therefore understanding, human behavior.

Social and Political Theory

As indicated above, the major theoretical implication derives from the 'empirical downfall' of elitist theory. That elitist hypotheses did not withstand the empirical test places elitist theoretical assumptions in a questionable light. The implication here addresses the long-standing "values-structure" debate in sociology. Although this study cannot presume to end that debate, it can shed some light upon the

direction that discussion should take.

As the research results show, hypothetical personal inadequacies (values, attitudes, or what have you) are not particularly helpful in explaining the hostility which emerged at Red Deer. Not to belabor the point, it is, rather, structural factors which appear more important. Although, the findings of this study consistently point to the primacy of the structure of social relationships, that does not mean that values, attitudes, and motives are not an important part of human existence. Attitudes or perceptions play an important part in human behavior at least to the extent that "what men perceive to be real are real in their consequences". This very notion suggests that structure has a primary role in forming attitudes which then can act upon behavior. Further work which attempts to incorporate structure and attitudes may be fruitful here.

A second point regarding elitist theory follows from the above. Elitist theory comes dangerously close to performing a 'justificatory function'. That is, elitist theory often purports to be descriptive, but the total elitist argument, at least by implication, is more than that. Describing what is often transforms it into what should be, and in fact that is the crux of the elitist argument - decision-making structures are elitist because they must be due to the personal inadequacies of the majority of citizens. A strict 'Davis-Moore' interpretation would start with the assumption that political skill, including attitudes, are unevenly distributed.

Other elitists point to differential socialization. In either case, the conclusion is that the majority should, therefore, be excluded from decision-making.

There is no theoretical nor, as this thesis has shown, empirical justification for the leap to exclusion. The research did find that those of high SES did participate more but not because they possessed a disproportionate share of "skills". From either the elitist or conflict standpoint, the above description should point to some examination of structure. The socialization argument itself points to structure, as the socialization takes place in a multitude of institutional (i.e. structural) settings. As such, the SES finding is simply descriptive. This finding, and its concomitant theoretical claim, are in a sense tautological - decision-making is elitist because those of high SES take part more often. The point here is that by making the conceptual leap, referred to above, elitist theory, whether explicitly or not, tends to justify what exists.

Elitist theory also suffers from a 'general functionalist malady'. Implied in the elitist approach is the notion that everything has a function (c.f. Tumin, 1965:383-385). The notion of apathy and the findings regarding apathy are examples here. The amount and distribution of political activity do not 'fit' the North American ideology (c.f. Milbraith, 1965:140-145), and however deplorable that situation is, it is nonetheless necessary (i.e. functional) for the successful operation of democracy. Apathy is functional in

that it maintains what is, but that does not explain its existence. Nor is apathy explained by reference to differential socialization as shown above.

All this leads to the conclusion that indeed a 'new' theory is needed. Theoretical and practical "anomalies" point to a similar general theoretical crisis as has been found in recent theoretical work in criminology and deviance (cf. Comack, 1976:3 and Hastings, 1979). In the very first instance, elitist theory would have a great deal of difficulty explaining why demands for public participation have arisen in the first place. If the distribution of political skills and attitudes is functional there is no reason for demands for public participation, at least when viewed from a theoretical vantage point. Unless, of course, one questions assumptions about the representativeness of representative government, the balance of power, the lack of consensus on societal values, and so on. These emergent questions point to the very concerns of the conflict approach.

This study did indeed find that factors such as structure, power, and conflict produced more plausible explanation. It was found that the structure of the participation, for instance, was such that public participants were in a very subordinate position resulting in a specific set of interests and needs (economic/industrial) being satisfied to the detriment of other legitimate needs and interests. If what was found here is representative, some rather weighty societal implications emerge, which will be discussed later.

Although the conflict approach obtained basic empirical support, that does not mean that the theory is complete. For instance, questions still remain regarding the existence of elitist decision-making, why economic/industrial interests dominate, the processes of economic domination, and so forth. Furthermore, since the definition of public participation used here focused on formal political structure, the theory, it would seem, requires some clarification of the roles and functions of the state in the participation process. The recent work of some political sociologists, especially in the realm of political economy, may be useful (see for example Miliband, 1969 and 1977 and Panich (ed.), 1977). In other words, fuller theoretical clarification of the structure and process of participation is the next step.

Given the findings regarding apathy, it appears that at best some political attitudes and values are important, although not primary. Future theorizing should take account of these factors. A very interesting possibility has been a recent attempt to "weld" the works of Marx and Mead (Hastings, 1979). Although that particular work is concerned with the sociology of deviance, it is an attempt to understand behavior through a meshing of the macro-and micro-sociological concerns. Hopefully, this study will, at least, foster further theoretical work as suggested.

Theory of Planning and Public Participation

At the very least, this thesis has re-affirmed the notion that planning (or decision-making) and public participation cannot be discussed separately. They have such an intimate relationship that the two should occur together. The findings of this thesis also confirm the need to reconceptualize the planning process². Much more attention must be paid to the structure and the process of planning.

In terms of structure, the importance of power is primary. There are two aspects of power which must be brought up. First, public participation must have some impact on decision-making if it is to succeed and grow. Without impact the process will surely break down, resulting in hostile confrontation only. The most important finding in this study is the lack of impact by public participants and that the lack of impact was due to the structure of the programme and not inadequacies of participants. It is hopeless to expect the public to continue in a process which does not take account of their voice.

The second aspect of power regards its distribution. If any bargaining is to take place in planning all interests must be fed into the process with equal force. Without equality of power bargaining cannot occur and some interests and needs will suffer. This research showed that economic/industrial interests dominated the Red Deer River decision with very little effort. Such being the case, it is no wonder that a

large number of basin residents reacted negatively.

This is not to say that the decision reached was the wrong one. It may be that a dam at site 6 would serve all needs and interests (or the public interest), but that is pure speculation. This point raises two very interesting and important issues. First, what is being said does not imply that all are self-interested and that some common ground can only be derived on the "battlefield". Rather, it appears to be safe to say that no one has a monopoly on the power to know the public interest. The public interest can be best determined through a bargaining process between competing interests and when it is discovered in practise not "on paper": that is, through negotiation.

One important issue which requires theoretical work emerges from one of the elitist findings. Content analysis did find that all those directly and adversely affected by the government plan were also opponents of the plan. Although continually discounted, there may be some validity to the notion that some people may always be 'hurt' by progress. In other words, there may be a "tyranny of the majority". Incorporating the needs of a few into the needs of the majority is a difficult theoretical and practical question. On the surface, it appears that providing alternatives for the few is one way by which the few will not have to suffer for the good of the greatest number. It also appears that at least part of the answer to this question must be determined in practise. An equality of power may be one means by which this

particular issue can be settled.

Second, the negotiation imperative describes one of the macro-micro binds referred to earlier. That is, the attitude known as 'community-mindedness' can develop through a structure which provides equality of power. In discussion with other interests and needs, individuals can develop a stance which accounts for others.

All the above suggest that a 'new' structure of decision-making will necessarily result. The elitist structures now in place must give way to other forms which can accommodate the concerns mentioned above. This point will be expanded in a discussion of the practical implications of this study.

The final implication to be mentioned here, in some senses, brings all the above concerns together. A reconceptualization of the planning process could very well begin by stating that the process must be dialectical. In the final analysis, the planning process is concerned with goals and means. The goals/means distinction must be seen though in dynamic rather than static terms. Goals and means appear as separate but in reality they are not; they must be discovered in a simultaneous process, a dialectical process. One does not determine the other but rather each reacts on the other to hopefully form a unified whole.

It would be easy to conceive of planning and public participation in a static, goals/means relationship. That is, public participation is concerned with goals while planning addresses means. Although, this separation could be made for

some analytic purposes, it appears much more fruitful to see the two in a dynamic, dialectical relationship. Goals cannot be concretely and totally formulated without means, and simple determination of means assumes goals to be settled. It is this relationship and the other concerns expressed above from which emerge the major practical implications of this study.

Practical Implications

Before delving into the practical suggestions emerging from this thesis it would be well to first indicate a series of "warnings". That is, there are several issues which are not directly practical recommendations but which nonetheless must be discussed here.

First, the findings of this research, especially in its empirical support for the conflict approach, have some rather large-scale socio-political implications. Conflict theory does indeed invoke an alternative vision of society which sees the breakdown of the dominance of economic interests, equality of power, a truly 'participatory society', and so on. It cannot be denied that these are elements of the conflict view and that they may represent socio-political arrangements quite different from that which exists.

Moreover, too often these implications represent to both those within the conflict tradition and those outside it a "call to arms" (c.f. Comack Antony, n.d.). Nothing could be further from the case. Although the end-state characterized

by the above is contained in the following implications, there must be a distinction made between reform and some kind of instant, revolutionary change (see Miliband, 1977:Chapter VI for an excellent discussion of this point). As such, there are certain "interim" measures which could be adopted to improve upon public participation.

Third, the commitment to that particular end-state described above means that public participation will have to move ahead slowly and gradually. If a participatory society is to evolve, the commitment must be just that. Too often the call for public participation is taken to mean replacing present decision-makers with someone "off the street". Such a move is doomed to failure. Public participation means - not replacing decision-makers - but bringing them into a process which allows others to take part - i.e. different structures.

Furthermore, many of the questions to be faced cannot be 'worked out' simply 'on paper' (i.e. in theory). Much of what public participation will become depends on practise. That is, there is a dialectical relation between theory and practise, each informing the other. Sadler puts it this way:

critical considerations of philosophical ideas and ongoing evaluation of practical experience can pay dividends in the form of guidelines for improving the process of participation. Ultimately, of course, this type of input is merely suggestive. The future direction participation takes will be determined by what the public demands, or what they accept, in the way of involvement in decisions which affect them and their environment. And no proscriptions

from conferences, or for that matter proclamations by politicians, will really alter this (Sadler, 1978:8).

This relationship between theory and practise means, again, that public participation will take time. But, it does require a commitment. An excellent example of the slow progress can be found in the worker participation at Polysar in Sarnia, Ontario. According to both management and employees the experiment has required large amounts of time, energy, and resources; progress has come only through determination and hard work, but it has come (CBC, Quarterly Report, 24 June 1979).

Finally, this entire thesis and especially this final chapter should not be misconstrued as a government policy- or program-formulation report. Although certain more or less concrete recommendations can be made, the task here is not to write legislation. Because of the imperatives of Praxis (theory and practise), and because this is still an academic exercise, the suggestions to follow will at times be vague and/or abstract. Hopefully, a balance between simply interpreting the world and aiding in changing the world can be struck (c.f. Marx, 1959: 245). With these things said we can now proceed.

Practical suggestions emerging from this study can be discussed in three separate categories: legislation, stages of planning, and information and resources. Throughout what follows reference will be made to the Red Deer River episode as a means of illustration³.

Legislation

Not only must there be commitment to the goal of public participation as an end in itself, as implied above, but there must also be legislative action. This prescription has at best two meanings, both of which have been touched upon earlier. First, there must be the fact of not simply the opportunity for public participation. This means creating an institutional framework within which public participation can take place. The Environment Conservation Authority is an excellent example of an on-going structure which is already in place. An institutional framework is necessary because all the motivation in the world can easily be frustrated without "something to participate in". The apathy finding within elitist theory showcases the necessity of motivation in participation, as does the slow progress of on-going participation experiments. A motivated and organized public is required as well as a means of participating. It appears that the ECA in Alberta is a step in the right direction for public participation in environmental decision-making. Similar structures or vehicles in other areas would also be needed⁴.

Although in fact the ECA has experienced legislative changes, discussed in Chapter Six, which must be seen as regressive. To counteract the ECA's present appearance as a public relations arm of the D of E it should regain its arm's length distance from the government. To remain at some distance from the government, the ECA may not need to report to cabinet

rather than a minister. One possible move would be to specify when the ECA will come on the scene rather than simply at ministerial request. It could be that the ECA should be involved in any major environmental project, as with the ERCB and any major resource project. The ERCB example suggests that the specification of major project is not as vague a notion as appears on the surface. It would also be desirable to allow for public initiative. Creating conditions favorable for public initiative would mean specifying ways and means by which the public could get the participation vehicle into the act.

The most important aspect must be in spelling out the impact of the ECA or any participation programme on decision-making. As it stands whatever public desires emerge from a participation programme are subject to total ministerial discretion. If nothing else this study has shown that it is impact upon decisions which is a most important factor. One clue to possible concretization here is requiring an "environmental permit" for all major projects in the province, in the case of the ECA, in much the same manner as the ERCB issues industrial permits. In fact, it would almost seem that the two, the ECA and ERCB, go hand-in-hand.

Finally, legislation must guarantee that the public most directly affected will be the first to be consulted. In the Red Deer River case we saw that PAC had very few, only one, person from the immediate area. Legislation should require identification of those directly affected and further require that those thus identified be the first involved through

whatever means is suitable.

The main point here is that there must be legislative guarantees. The public must know that it will be consulted and that its consultation will be meaningful. This means that there must be a transfer of power through some means. Notions of delegated authority, joint planning, and so on describe this sharing of power.

Stages of Planning

A "multi-intersection" or "multi-juncture" process is required here. That is, the several actors and roles in the planning process must 'come together' at many points in the process. Planners, politicians, and the public must meet at several intervals. This general prescription means multi-stage participation, flexibility, and re-conceptualization of planning and its roles.

First of all, there must be participation at all stages in the process which, incidentally, should also be guaranteed. Public input at each stage recognizes the socio-political as well as technical aspects of planning. Participation is especially important in the first stage - the initial and tentative identification of goals. It must be recognized that society is not organized around agreed-upon, major value premises which can be known a priori.

Stage one participation means identification of and consultation with all interests involved. Consultation and

negotiation amongst the various interests may determine some common ground which can guide the remainder of the process. Without "all-interest" participation here some interests may be left out. In this way, it may be possible for other needs to bargain with the typically dominant, economic ones. In the Red Deer River case, the interests identified - agricultural, environmental, industrial, recreational, etc. - should have been brought together and through their discussion terms of reference (i.e. objectives) determined for the data collection. Public input here could also mean "brainstorming" for alternatives. Most important though here is identification of the problem and implicitly, then, identification of the goals or objectives.

Suggesting public participation at all stages does not mean the public will take over the technical aspects of planning. Stage two - data collection and analysis and identification of alternatives - remains quite technical and beyond most of the public. It is here that technical skills come to the forefront. It is also at this point which the 'planner as facilitator' role is highlighted. Technical experts are required to identify costs and benefits of many alternative modes of action. In the Red Deer River case, several possibilities existed for dealing with river problems - offstream storage, groundwater, dams, combinations of these, or doing nothing. A reconceptualized planning process would see experts identifying costs and benefits of every one of those possibilities. This in turn raises two other points.

First, data collection and identification of alternatives points up the dialectical nature of planning: the two occur simultaneously and act upon goals. Several possible solutions can be identified in a tentative fashion but cannot be judged without information. Thus identification of 'real' alternatives first requires concretizing tentative action options. As alternatives bring out hard information a re-examination of goals may take place. A most obvious illustration of this took place at Red Deer. The goal of industrialization appears, on the surface, as a desirable and attainable goal. But, with information regarding means to that goal was the suggestion was that it was too costly in its agricultural, social and environmental costs. The goal of industrialization may have remained if a dialectical or flexible process were in place, but the necessary 'goal-discussion' did not take place.

Secondly, all alternatives must be publically discussed. Removal of some alternatives from public scrutiny, as happened at Red Deer, places the whole process in a manipulative light. In a redefinition of roles it is not for the experts to remove alternatives unilaterally. Choosing site 6 and 7 over other alternatives before and without public discussion violated the principle here and, again, effectively removed possible public impact. An alternative way of proceeding would have been data collection and analysis on the several possible alternatives to the river problems. With some admittedly preliminary information at hand and in discussion with

the public, alternatives for intensive study could have been identified - not just one, a dam as was done at Red Deer. It is in this way that technical experts facilitate concretization of public needs and desires, which is after all what planning claims to serve in the first place.

Finally, public participation should also occur in the last stage - choice of alternative action - as it does now, although there must be guarantees of influence. Late stage participation must not be the only participation, as once the money is spent it is very difficult to alter an inevitable outcome (c.f. Fuller, 1976 and Levin, 1976:26-28).

The recommendations here do, indeed, mean a re-structured and much slower planning process. Complaints from planners notwithstanding, it appears that a fully participatory decision process will be slow and requires commitment to the 'end-in-itself' ideal. Decisions forthcoming from the decision process envisioned above may be slow but may be more effective - that which is fastest may not be the best.

Information and Resources

This study did point to the paramount position of information in decision-making. Although there may be public participation associated with the data collection stage, the public cannot and should not assume this role - public participation is not information collection, it is decision-making. The basic prescription here is that information flows freely

and provides a basis for comparison of alternatives. Competent public opinions cannot be formulated without information to assess all alternatives. Without such comparative information charges of manipulation can easily emerge, for it could easily appear that some needs and interests were being ignored. At Red Deer, for example, only dams were studied and it was claimed a dam was necessary for industrialization - the relegation of other interests to a subordinate position is obvious here.

An "adversary" or "dialectical" information system appears enticing here. The SAC of the ECA provides an excellent illustration. An independent body which assesses information gathered can often provide a necessary critical point of view. A group such as the SAC attached to any public participation vehicle could prove especially vital to the process.

Resources becomes a secondary concern if access to and flow of information is guaranteed. With free-flowing information those somewhat lacking in resources gain an equal footing with others not so disadvantaged. Again, the lessons of advocacy planning (see Breitbart, 1972 and Corey, 1972 for example) suggest that information, resources, and expertise are not necessarily effective without power.

Resources are important in a commitment sense. Public participation is time and resource consuming, but to succeed there must be a commitment of public funds for much must be worked out in practise. Moreover, substantial resources may be required to overcome initial public apathy through

programmes of education and organization. Apathy which has emerged and crystallized over the years may mean some overall societal changes but, again, some interim measures can be undertaken; for as strong as the case may be regarding structural factors, apathy can have a damaging effect on the success of participation programmes - structures without people are rather hollow shells. The point here is that apathy is probably more of an effect of structure than a cause.

Future Research

As the objectives of this study were primarily practical and theoretical its methodological implications may appear sparse in comparison. Furthermore, given the need for further theoretical expansion and clarification, methodological observations, for the time being, may 'take a back seat'. Despite this, however, some interesting possibilities for future research have emerged.

The major observation which occurred in the actual research was the strength of multiple techniques. Although consuming much in time, energy, and resources, multiple methods have the great advantage of informing each other. Both the case techniques and content analysis aided each other - with case techniques especially suggesting categories for content analysis.

Another point which must be noted is the appearance, at least, of the strength of content analysis as a method of data collection. Content analysis, although underutilized,

appears to have strength in both dimensions of generalization discussed in Chapter Four. Content analysis could be used to analyze documents, especially historical documents, which cover both time and space, whereas other techniques appear less amenable to such a suggestion. In addition, content analysis adds some statistical precision to such research.

Otherwise, this study basically re-affirmed methodological concerns discussed elsewhere. Case study has a distinct generalization problem but does provide a means of theoretical assessment. Specification of categories and coding in content analysis are both difficult and time consuming. The low values of the measures of the strength of relationships and the sometimes large numbers of missing cases suggest further work could be done in improving the operational definitions of categories coded, for example.

In the author's view, this study has, however, pointed to some very interesting possible research projects for the future. As pointed out earlier, more theoretical work is required to answer questions regarding the existence of particular participation structures. Such work points to the possibility of more detailed historical study to answer those questions. Study which would examine the evolution of participation and decision-making structures in a particular community (however defined) could be very interesting and exciting.

In addition, the elitist findings regarding apathy also suggest future research possibilities. Not only does apathy need to be included in future theorization but research into the

"causes" of apathy needs to be done. Some past research on socialization, referred to earlier, may provide some "stepping-stones". It is important, though, especially in a practical sense to come to a greater understanding of the phenomenon of apathy if public participation is to grow and develop.

More importantly, this study may have pointed the way to providing the much needed case-comparability in the subject area. The theoretical work done here, and that still needed, coupled with the content analysis technique, could transcend the generalization problem of the single case study. From a well-developed theoretical framework, focusing on structural variables, categories for content analysis could be derived. With such categories at hand, content analysis could be applied to the already large number of case studies in the Canadian experience. Jones (1969) carried out such a study, with reasonable success, in examining the processes involved in planned organizational change. A similar study of public participation in Canada could very well remove the space-generalization qualification attached to this thesis; and, indeed, provide a much fuller understanding of the practise and theory of public participation.

Notes

1. It might be suggested that if site 11 were chosen over site 6 the analysis presented would collapse in that the "right"

decision would have been made, at least from the point of view of Red Deer River valley residents. The choice of site 6 over site 11 is quite puzzling given that much of the hostility engendered could have been avoided; but even if site 11 was chosen the conflict model analysis would remain and the conclusions reached would not suffer. The fact that site 6 was chosen over the more acceptable site 11 showcases the basic structural problem - the outcome of the public participation process was subject to the whims of the political elite, the public participants remained structurally subordinate. If site 11 had been chosen it could be argued, from the point of view of the conflict model, that the elite was more benevolent than was the actual case; as such the main structural argument is not radically affected.

In addition, if site 11 had been chosen the Red Deer episode might very well have been classified a success; which points out the necessity of including successful participation experiences in an overall examination of public participation in Canada.

2. It should be pointed out that the prescribed reconceptualization of the planning process is currently taking place. Many of the authors referred to in the elaboration of the conflict model have begun just such a task. In addition, several authors have made such attempts in a specifically Canadian context (see Gerecke, 1973; Burton, 1976 and Paget, 1976, for example).
3. In much of what follows the ECA will be used as an example. In doing so the intent is to simply clarify; suggestions made should be taken in general terms applicable to other participation and decision-making situations.
4. It should be noted that by using the ECA as an example it is not the intention to endorse public hearings as the only or the best means of public participation. There are many possible forms of participation all of which have advantages and disadvantages depending upon the specific situation. An adequate discussion of participation techniques is beyond the scope of the present work, although it is a discussion which is necessary at some point.

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Appendix A

Methodological Notes

The first reliability measure was calculated very simply as the number of coding decisions possible (434) compared to the number of decisions which were in agreement between t-0 and t-1 (403). This calculation can be misleading though for the total number of coding decisions in agreement can be made up of component decisions which were not in agreement. That is, although the totals are similar the paths leading to the same total can be very different. This is so because percentage of observed agreement disregards the number of different coding categories used and looks only at the total number of decisions, rather than the coding decisions within each category.

Bennet's coefficient of reliability solves the above problem by taking account of the number of coding categories (14). As such, Bennet's coefficient of reliability was calculated as follows:

$$CR = \frac{K}{K-1} \left(Po - \frac{1}{K} \right)$$

CR = coefficient of reliability
 K = number of categories
 Po = percentage of observed agreement

Scott's index of reliability further refines the measure of reliability as it accounts not only for the number of categories but also the frequency of use, as indicated in the text. As such, expected agreement due to chance is determined and added into the calculation. Scott's index is calculated as follows:

$$IR = \frac{Po - Pe}{1 - Pe}$$

IR = index of reliability

Pe = expected agreement due to chance
 Po = observed agreement

Expected agreement (Pe) is calculated as the sum of squares of the percentage of items coded in each category compared to the total number coded. In the case at hand, the expected agreement was calculated at .0343.

Validity of multiple indicators

Tables A-1 through A-5 present the relationships found between multiple measures as indicated in the text.

Table A-1

Validity of competence indicators						
		Argument		Length		Alternative Suggested
Issues		yes	no	long	short	yes no
few		59.5%	40.5%	30.3%	69.7%	53.5% 41.5%
many		90.8%	9.2%	28.7%	67.5%	74.2% 28.5%
significance=		.000		.000		.0129
phi=		.3572		.38831		.16563

Table A-2

Validity of competence indicators					
			Alternative Suggested		
		Argument			
Length		yes	no	yes	no
long		94.3%	5.7%	76.4%	23.6%
short		44.5%	55.5%	55.9%	44.1%
significance=			.000		
phi=			.44432		
			.001		
			.21653		

Table A-3

Validity of competence indicators
Alternative
Suggested

Argument	yes	no
yes	72.6%	27.4%
no	46.8%	53.2%

significance=.0004
phi=.23611

Table A-4

Validity of power indicators

Information

Trust	adequate	inadequate
yes	80%	20%
no	2.1%	97.9%

significance=.000
phi=.77872

It should be noted that the large number of missing cases in the test of power indicator validity somewhat limits any methodological conclusions emerging therefrom.

Table A-5

Validity of apathy indicators

Reports read

Appeared-in-'75	yes	no
yes	95%	5%
no	60.6%	39.4%

significance=.0002
phi=.37229

Appendix B

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Feasibility and Cost Studies

I.H. Anderson	V. Fafard
C. Lukay	A.T. McPhail
J. Card	S.P. Powell

Consultant: Damsite No. 6:
Klohn Leonoff Consultants, Ltd.

Damsite No. 7:
E.B.A. Engineering Consultants Ltd.

Fish Study

M. Paetz	A.T. McPhail
M. Kraft	S.P. Powell
P. Paetkau	H. Lembic

Consultant: Aquatic Environments Ltd.

Wildlife Study

B. Markham	A.T. McPhail
D. Larsen	S.P. Powell

Agency: Fish and Wildlife Division,
Alberta Lands & Forests.

Water Quality Study

P. Grant	A.T. McPhail
E. Peake	S.P. Powell
H. Lembicz	

Agency: Pollution Control Division,
Alberta Environment.

Recreation Study

W. Shaw	J. Nowicki
T. Walls	R. White
B. Cowell	M. Turcotte
W. Munn	A.T. McPhail
D. Kidney	S.P. Powell

Consultant: Synergy West Ltd.

Archaeology Study

R. Kidd	A.T. McPhail
S.P. Powell	

Agency: J.M. Quigg on behalf of
Alberta Archaeological Survey.

River Regime Study

G. Samide	A.T. McPhail
S.P. Powell	

Consultant: T. Blench and Associates Ltd.
on behalf of Associated Engineering
Services Ltd.

Sociological Study

A.F. Belyea
R.E. Barrett
D. Anderson

R. Lefrancois
A.T. McPhail
S.P. Powell

Consultant: D.S. Gill and D.G. Murri

Benefit-Cost Analysis

R. Lefrancois
S.P. Powell

A.T. McPhail

Consultant: D. Seastone on behalf
of Synergy West Ltd.

Appendix C
Alberta Environment

What follows is taken from Alberta Environment's Red Deer River Flow Regulation Planning Studies: Main Report, page 171.

(i) General Terms of Reference

A study shall be undertaken on a damsite on the Red Deer River in the vicinity of the location commonly referred to as the Raven site.

The study shall determine and document the following.

1. The engineering feasibility and estimated cost of a dam.
2. The degree to which a dam would modify flow in the Red Deer River below the dam with respect to augmentation during the periods of natural low flow, and reduction of flood flows, particularly in the vicinity of the City of Red Deer.
3. The degree to which modified flow could effectively alleviate the problem of low oxygen content in the river and a comparison of costs involved as opposed to costs of possible measures other than modification of flows.
4. The extent to which a modified flow pattern will meet current and future foreseeable water supply requirements for domestic, municipal, industrial and agricultural purposes.
5. The effect of a modified flow regime on existing erosion problems.
6. The economic benefits to be derived from flow regime modification and a comparison of these benefits with the cost of providing them.
7. The extent to which the construction of a dam and the resultant modified flow regime will enhance existing, or create new, opportunities for public recreational activity, both at the damsite as well as along the river.
8. An environmental impact assessment to include environmental benefits or disbenefits arising out of the construction of a dam and the resulting modified flow regime, and an identification of additional measures

or alternate solutions which would alleviate or minimize detrimental environmental effects.

9. The study shall be conducted by a task force structure as outlined and approved in the May, 1973 Red Deer River Study Proposal Report, with the added provision for participation by the Federal Government.
10. The study shall proceed such that a final report is completed and submitted in sufficient time to permit public hearings to be held in October of 1974. If it is the decision to recommend to the Legislature that implementation proceed, appropriate legislation shall be drafted for presentation to the 1974 fall session of the Legislature.

What follows is taken from Environment News, vol. 1, no. 1, 1971, page 5.

(ii) Objectives and Organization

The Department of the Environment was formed April 1, 1971 by the amalgamation of the Water Resources Division of the Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Health Services Division of the Department of Health. These were the original core units. To these were added Administrative Services, the Interdepartmental Planning and Relationships Division, the Information Division and a Research Division. The Natural Resources Co-ordinating Council and the Conservation and Utilization Committee, made up of Deputy Ministers and technical staff respectively, of all natural resource departments, are the main interdepartmental co-ordinating units.

The role of the Alberta Environment, within the context of total function of government, is to promote a balance between resource management, environmental protection and the quality of life. This role will be achieved through interdepartmental government planning of policies, programs and services.

These will generally be initiated and co-ordinated by the Department of the Environment in co-operation with other departments and agencies of the Alberta government, other governments and non-governmental organizations including industry and the private sector.

In essence, the role of government is to emphasize prevention rather than treatment on the basis that this principal is logical, practical and more economical. With environ-

mental matters, this means that the government needs co-ordination, comprehensive input and long-term planning. Thus, the people of Alberta can be better assured of the development of the province's resources to enable a good quality of life in five, 50 or 500 years.

Appendix D

Public Advisory Committee Questionnaire

The following is taken from D. Gill and D. Murri,
Red Deer River Flow Regulation Planning Studies: sociological
assessment. 1975, page 182.

All material is treated in strict confidence.

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

What is your understanding of the role of the Public Advisory Committee:

Do you feel that this role has been fulfilled? Yes_____ No_____

How were you selected as a member of the Public Advisory Committee?

Who selected you as a member of the Public Advisory Committee?

How did you feel about being selected a member of this Committee?

Have you reported to anyone or some group the matters covered at meetings you have attended or information you have received?
 Yes_____ No_____ If you answered yes, how and to whom did you report?

If you answered no, why?

Have you been satisfied with the activities of the Public Advisory Committee? Yes_____ No_____ Would you please explain your answer.

Would you be willing to serve upon a Public Advisory Committee again? Yes_____ No_____

In you opinion are there any other people, groups or segments of the population that were not involved in the Public Advisory Committee? Yes_____ No_____ If you answered yes, please list those not involved.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix D

Business Development and
Tourism Letter

The following is taken from the Proceedings, 1977
(III - Innisfail), pages 211-212.

September 19, 1975

Dow Chemical of Canada, Limited
Dome Petroleum Limited
The Alberta Gas Ethylene Company Limited
The Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Limited

Dear Sirs:

We acknowledge the receipt of your letter of September 19, 1975 describing your proposed petrochemical project. Based on the undertakings and intentions expressed in your letter, the Government approves the project subject to your company's complying with all of the applicable Provincial statutes and regulations, and obtaining the necessary approvals from Provincial regulatory bodies.

In accordance with your request, the Government of Alberta confirms that:

- (a) It is the Government's policy to have the wellhead price of natural gas within the Province of Alberta based on a price at BTU parity with Canadian produced crude oil at the Toronto City Gate less natural gas transportation cost back to the wellhead in Alberta. The Government of Alberta recognizes that the economic competitiveness of the project is at this time primarily based on that policy. In the event that the price of Alberta natural gas goes above the said parity, the Government of Alberta, for a period of ten years from the date of start-up of the first ethylene plant, will take such action as may be required to maintain the economic competitiveness of ethylene produced by A.G.E. in Alberta.
- (b) The Government will ensure that there is available within a reasonable distance from Government approved plant sites an adequate water supply for the projects described in this letter but the Government will not be responsible for the cost of transporting the water to any plant site.
- (c) The Government will take the appropriate steps to ensure that the ethane may be extracted on reasonable terms from the gas streams now leaving Alberta.

In addition, the Government of Alberta confirms that in the event it provides grants or subsidies to other users of ethylene

produced from ethane, that Dow Chemical of Canada Limited will be given equal treatment.

Sincerely,

R.W. Dowling
Business Development and Tourism
Office of the Minister.

B30245